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Regional Oral History Office  
The Bancroft Library

University of California  
Berkeley, California

Geraldine Knight Scott  
(1904-1989)

A WOMAN IN LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE IN CALIFORNIA, 1926-1989

Introductions by Jack Buktenica  
and Reed Dillingham

Based on Interviews Conducted by  
Jack Buktenica, 1976

Edited by Suzanne B. Riess  
1989

Since 1954 the Regional Oral History Office has been interviewing leading participants in or well-placed witnesses to major events in the development of Northern California, the West, and the Nation. Oral history is a modern research technique involving an interviewee and an informed interviewer in spontaneous conversation. The taped record is transcribed, lightly edited for continuity and clarity, and reviewed by the interviewee. The resulting manuscript is typed in final form, indexed, bound with photographs and illustrative materials, and placed in The Bancroft Library at the University of California, Berkeley, and other research collections for scholarly use. Because it is primary material, oral history is not intended to present the final, verified, or complete narrative of events. It is a spoken account, offered by the interviewee in response to questioning, and as such it is reflective, partisan, deeply involved, and irreplaceable.

\*\*\*\*\*

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Copy no. 1





GERALDINE KNIGHT SCOTT  
1985

*Photograph by George Waters*



## Cataloging Information

SCOTT, Geraldine Knight (1904-1989)

Landscape architect

A Woman in Landscape Architecture in California, 1926-1989, 1990, xvi, 235 pp.

Early landscape impressions, Idaho, Washington; Oakland, San Francisco, 1914-1922; landscape architecture degrees, UC Berkeley, and Cornell University, 1926~~4~~, 1928; A.E. Hanson office, Beverly Hills; Europe, 1930; sumi painting, Chiura Obata; partner, Van Pelt and Knight, Marin County clients, 1933-1939; marriage to Mel Scott, 1939, European housing study; Los Angeles, Citizen's Housing Council, Telesis; practice: San Jose, war years; Palo Alto, 1947-1952; Berkeley, 1952- ; lecturer, UC Berkeley Department of Landscape Architecture, 1959-1969; travels and professional associations. Appended: Telesis notes, and Regional Oral History Office interviews with G.K. Scott on Thomas D. Church, 1978, and on Blake Gardens, Kensington, 1988.

Preface by Geraldine Knight Scott. Introductions by Jack Buktenica, landscape architect, and Reed Dillingham, landscape architect.

Interviewed 1976 by Jack Buktenica. Edited by Suzanne B. Riess. The Regional Oral History Office, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley.



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## PREFACE by Geraldine Knight Scott

That my personal history and experience as a lady landscape architect in California was unique was first stated by Jack Buktenica, who had worked in my office in the fifties. He had an idea for an illustrated biography. Would I make some tapes recording my experience? I agreed to this strange process of thinking out loud, answering questions which I had never asked myself.

Jack was curious about what motivated me. He had a thesis that my lack of a normal childhood and nurturing had been the spur to my choice of the profession of landscape architecture. Perhaps it was. I had not looked back in this way before, and I found the process painful, exposing some wounds, but also many rewards. [In notes accompanying this preface, Mrs. Scott has written: "born too soon; no role models; physically, I was a premature baby; historically, made independent by circumstance; professionally, a woman in a man's profession."]

The transcripts of those fourteen tapes was so distressingly complex that Jack gave up the idea of writing a biography, and placed it under "file and forget" where it remained for eight years. However, after making a tape on Tommy Church in 1976 for the Regional Oral History Office of The Bancroft Library, where I was again questioned about my own experiences, I pulled out the old transcript, did some editing, and gave it to the Oral History Office for editing and retyping.

Suzanne Riess, who had been my interviewer for the Church project, commented in a letter that the taped autobiography was "an ideal combination of on-going narrative, anecdotal material, reflections on the times, transitions, causes and effects." But I found it to be neither a biography nor a professional history. Again, it was consigned to "file and forget."

In 1985 I was again urged to record my professional experiences. Instead of starting fresh I edited, cut, slashed, and pieced together what might be relevant to the history of landscape architecture in the West, only to have several readers raise questions about my childhood and adolescence, and more about my later work and professional concerns. Thus, the introductory and final chapters are a product of recent ruminations.

Time has changed me and my perceptions. The cross-sections and perspectives here assembled are separated by many years of growth and change. Since 1922, when I enrolled in the Department of Landscape Design at UC Berkeley, to this year of the 75th anniversary of that department, the percentage of women in the profession has increased from two percent to 55 percent. I was not the first, nor the brightest, but I am the only woman who both had my own office for over thirty years and taught as a lecturer in the College of Environmental Design.

I am not a feminist, but I was often the female token representative of the young profession, the "little woman" supervising a crew of workmen in design-build operations. I was the first woman to work in the Los Angeles County Planning Office, the only woman to participate in school and recreation planning conferences, and the only woman to be a member of various city and county committees and commissions, and so on.

Herewith, the story of a pioneer without portfolio.

Geraldine Knight Scott, FASLA

June 1989  
Berkeley, California



## INTRODUCTION by Jack Buktenica

I conducted the oral interviews with Gerry Scott that this history is based on with the intention of doing a book on her work. For two years, 1956 and 1957, I was an apprentice to Gerry.

The sequence that led me to her doorstep was that I became a father and realized the need to continue developing my occupational skills. I had studied two years of architecture and decided it was not the discipline for me to complete. I was a draftsperson for the consulting structural engineer to Mies van der Rohe, and had extensive experience in mechanical drafting and tool design. I again considered completing a degree in architecture, but my original decision seemed correct, and so I decided to have informational interviews with landscape architects.

The first on my list of landscape architects, because he responded warmly to my request, was Doug Baylis in San Francisco. He liked the level of my skills in drafting and was very encouraging about developing those skills towards licensing through an apprenticeship in professional offices. He regretted he did not have a need for assistance, but he helped generate a list of potentially receptive landscape architects for me to call. The first person on the list was Gerry Scott. She was in need of a part time draftsperson, and we scheduled an appointment. She was favorably impressed with my work examples in several disciplines and she hired me part time for a trial period.

Gerry was willing to hire me based on my skills, and also on her expressed frustration with the inability of landscape architecture graduates to produce working drawings. She felt this was due to two factors: academic standards and cultural attitude. There was an academic absence of concern to develop the drafting skills for construction drawings needed to take a project from conceptual design to completion of construction. Construction drawings are our primary means of communication in the profession. And she felt there was a soft cultural attitude towards work and effort. Years later, when I was an employer of landscape architecture graduates, her view was most graphically illustrated when I had to teach one graduate how to properly hold a drafting pencil!

It is true that Gerry's standards were very high. She also became engrossed in projects with a vengeance. When she visited gardens abroad she took few pictures, but she measured details with her tape, and she paced larger distances to comprehend more accurately the scale. This intensity was further pronounced by her relationship with her husband: Mel Scott was a complete intellectual, and very artistic in several media. He thought we designer-artist types were a little fuzzy at the edges, and he constantly pressed Gerry to be more accurate in all levels of communication--this in the context of a very devoted, loving relationship.

Gerry and I worked in the small but comfortable separate studio in the lower level of the Scott's Berkeley home. It was a learning laboratory for me. She generously shared with me in detail all aspects of the process from conceptual design through working drawings. She had a deep respect for the learning process and the student. There were times when this was flowing and joyful, and times of tension and frustration. She gave me a deep understanding of the discipline to manage these two aspects of the process because her standards were as high or higher for herself as they were for others. We developed a good rapport and mutual respect.

I had to take a night job to work part time for Gerry. This was wearing. She thought I had a natural ability for the work and encouraged me to get another part time job with another landscape architect and stop working nights. She called Doug Baylis to recommend me, and he was in need of part time work. The unique individual high quality of these two offices was very inspiring--a truly golden opportunity.

There are two main points I need to make about Gerry. First, her integrity was impeccable. This expressed itself professionally, socially, and politically. Professionally, she refused to engage in a project if she viewed it as inappropriate. This included consideration of aesthetics, ecology, and general quality. Commitment to high standards in these areas cost her considerable loss of income. She expressed regret that colleagues whose talents she respected engaged in projects that she considered inappropriate. She supported early efforts to develop professional standards for licensing, standards for fee schedules, and to develop a consultant interviewing process based upon professional qualification first, and fee negotiation second.

The second point concerns her particular talents as a landscape architect. There is general agreement in the profession that she had a very special gift and tremendous knowledge for planting design. She continually developed and refined that special talent. Specialists in plant material from the University of California at Berkeley would frequently call upon Gerry when they were in need of information.

In this context is also important to recognize that Gerry had a profound understanding of architecture. She studied architecture in school, and she studied with passion the classic examples in Europe and Japan of both architecture and landscape architecture. This knowledge was expressed in one of Gerry's Japanese gardens that House Beautiful magazine published in September 1960. It was a special issue on "How To Be Shibui With American Things." I was the draftsman for that project.

Conditions rapidly changed in strengthening professional standards for licensing and school curriculum during the two years I was with Gerry. Doug Baylis encouraged me to complete my degree, which I did at Cal Poly in Pomona. Gerry did not approve, because she felt academic standards were higher at Berkeley. However, this did not impede our mutual respect, and we occasionally connected over those many years. Certainly I feel my apprenticeship with Gerry was the most important factor in my training, and I will always value this special opportunity. The combination of her talent and integrity were exceptional.

A personal detail I would like to conclude with is that whenever I stumped Gerry with a plant identification question, she would toss her head slightly to the side and say, "Oh, that old thing!" This response has become a part of my repertoire that always warmly recalls this special past relationship.

Jack Buktenica  
Landscape Architect

16 February 1990  
Palo Alto, California



## INTRODUCTION by Reed Dilllingham

Gerry Scott taught us planting design. The date was 1963, the year that Kennedy was shot. She was a lecturer in the Landscape Architecture Department on the Berkeley campus of the University of California and we were students in our junior year. She held class in one of the small rooms on the ground floor of Giannini Hall where landscape architecture classes met until the completion of Wurster Hall in 1965.

The room was completely unsuited to learning about the visual nature of planting design--it was cold and institutional, as well as poorly lighted. From a small window an attractive view of oaks and redwoods along Strawberry Creek suggested our topic. It was against this setting that Gerry talked to us about the rich visual character of plants and the elegant ways to use them.

Gerry's teaching method was unique and self-made, as it is with all good teachers. Although she read a great deal, she did not assign a lot of class reading or even discuss ideas from design books in her lectures. She relied largely on her own experiences and her own observations to convey her thoughts. It was the most basic and direct form of education. As I found later, Gerry felt that her travels and direct study of gardens had been her own best teacher. Measuring, drawing and photographing were the most sure ways to learn thoroughly the lessons of scale, proportion, texture and color that she stressed in her classes.

Her intelligence, forthrightness and sense for visual design were all qualities that made her unique both as a teacher and an individual. As a critic, she was direct and, while not unkind, did not use lots of extra words to try to soften any opinion that might sit uncomfortably with students or other faculty members.

She was also unusual as a teacher of visual design because she put a lot of emphasis on written expression. She herself used words very carefully and she expected no less than verbal precision from her students. Her corrections of student notebooks and written statements were often much more critical than her comments on drawings or other design work.

There was another side of Gerry's character that I, as a student, did not get to see very often. It was revealed one night when we had a large class dinner--for some occasion that escapes me now. At any rate, the meal had been completed, and many of the faculty, as well as some of the students, had left. However, with about ten students in their early twenties and Gerry, aged about sixty, remaining, the serious party was about to begin.

We turned up the stereo, poured a little more wine and started dancing to the Beatles new album "A Hard Days Night." After an hour or so, we realized that our hosts would like to retire, so we all drove over to Gerry's house and danced for another hour or two as a conga line that snaked its way through almost every room in Gerry's house, arms and feet flying. When we took a short break, Gerry--with only a slight twitch at the corner of her mouth to let us know she was kidding--said that watching the wild movements of one student's elbows had given her a whole new understanding of visual space.

After leaving school, I did not see Gerry for many years. But I had a chance to get reacquainted with her when we were both serving on an advisory committee. I had recently seen the planting design that she completed in the late sixties at the Oakland Museum. Although the gardens had deteriorated somewhat, I thought they were one of the finest examples of planting design I had ever seen. The many wonderful plant combinations reminded me again of the ideas and thoughts she passed along to us in her lectures. I mentioned my admiration for her work at one of the committee meetings and was rewarded later with a chance to work with her on another committee, this one to restore the gardens at the Museum.

In this situation, and with my older perspective, I could see portions of her character that were invisible to me as a student, such as her ability to "read" people--that is, to assess fairly accurately their character and anticipate their reaction in various situations. When confrontations arose in the committee, she had anticipated them and knew how to resolve them. She also had a good political sense that was very helpful when we needed support from the larger Oakland community and the City Council.

When I was in her planting design class at the University Gerry Scott was already "old"--or at least she seemed old to us. She must have been only in her early sixties. It doesn't seem so old now, but it did then. Maybe she seemed old then because she came across as being serious and intense, without the studied casualness that I found in my fellow students. This quality of hers came, I think, because she worked hard to communicate in the most clear and direct way about the lessons that she had found in her lifetime of experiences. At her age, I guess, you realize you aren't going to live forever, and you very much want to tell what you know, and to pass on ideas you believe are important.

At first, we were put off by her nervous insistence. However, as we followed her lead as a teacher, we began to understand what she meant more clearly. But it is really only now, after I have spent more than twenty-five years in landscape architecture, that her ideas, her words and her small energetic body come back to memory and tell me what I think she really meant.

Reed Dillingham  
Landscape Architect

1 February 1990  
Berkeley, California





## INTERVIEW HISTORY

At a meeting in December 1988, Roger Montgomery, Dean of the College of Environmental Design at UC Berkeley, proposed documenting the history of Telesis. Seven active participants in that environmental design organization, which first convened in 1939 to talk about planning for people, were present for the meeting. The plan was to include in the documentation oral histories with participants in the movement. I was there representing the Regional Oral History Office.

Before beginning the first of the interviews designed to document Telesis, I called on Geraldine Knight Scott. Our relationship had begun in 1976 with an interview that was part of the Thomas Church oral history that Mrs. Scott mentions above, Thomas D. Church, Landscape Architect [Regional Oral History Office, 1978]. I also did an oral history interview with Mrs. Scott for the Blake Estate Oral History Project [Regional Oral History Office, 1988]. Both the interviews are appended.

Gerrie Scott talked to me of her late husband Mel Scott's pivotal role in bringing Telesis to the Los Angeles area, and I planned to do a short interview with her about Telesis in southern California. I had not gotten to it when in July 1989 she called to say that she had printed matter on Telesis to give to the College of Environmental Design, and that she was doing an hour's interview with Carlisle Becker on her involvement with Telesis. ["Telesis Notes" are appended.]

Mrs. Scott also, in response to my inquiry, told me that she had been working on her autobiography--oral and otherwise--and that it had been retyped in 1987 and 1988. I was eager to have the oral history for The Bancroft Library, and on July 27th I arranged to visit to pick up the manuscript from Mrs. Scott. We had agreed that it should be finished and produced by the Regional Oral History Office. Gerrie Scott was very near the end of her life--six days later she died--and she was putting unfinished business in hands she trusted.

I have made only minor changes in what Mrs. Scott gave me, and I have left in the transcript those passages which contain the interviewer's questions--many of the questions had been removed at some point in earlier editing--which is the way I received it from Mrs. Scott.

It is an oral history and an autobiography and a professional history, all of them, and it is very alive. It has Geraldine Knight Scott's voice.

It was clear on that day a week before her death that she was in pain. Pain was familiar. She had not been well for years. In this last year she had dedicated herself to putting into order not only her own life but what was unfinished in her late husband Mel's affairs, his writings and art work. The only relief from pain--and from the hyperactivity of her mind, a result of the drugs to relieve that pain--was a kind of active daydreaming, intense visions and recollections of her travels to much-loved places. She marvelled at how vivid and complete the memories were.

This autobiography is, by her statement, intended to answer the question of who Geraldine Knight Scott was. Students benefitting from her endowments to the Department of Landscape Architecture and the College of Environmental Design at UC Berkeley will further benefit by knowing what this "lady landscape architect" chose to tell us about herself.

Gerrie Scott died having made the major decisions regarding her estate, but to Myrtle Wolf, Gerrie Scott's best friend, and to Jerrold Davis, Mrs. Scott's executor, fell many minor decisions about disposition of papers and memorabilia. Photo albums and scrapbooks have gone to The Bancroft Library. Mrs. Scott's lecture notes, slides, portfolios of drawings, photographs, etc., have gone to the Department of Landscape Architecture at UC Berkeley, and they will be placed in the College of Environmental Design Documents Collection. Geraldine Knight Scott's generosity has made possible funds for the Documents Collection, and a travelling fellowship in landscape architecture.

Students and friends of Geraldine Knight Scott owe Jack Buktenica thanks for initiating and carrying out the interviews. We also thank Jack and Reed Dillingham for their introductions to their mentor. Thanks to James R. K. Kantor for proofreading. Thanks very much to Jerrold Davis and to Myrtle Wolf for helping the Regional Oral History Office finish our part of the work.

Suzanne B. Riess  
Senior Editor

August 1989  
Berkeley, California

## GERALDINE KNIGHT SCOTT

August 2, Gerry Scott died at her home in Berkeley. She was 85.

She was best known to many of us landscape architects as an outstanding teacher of planting design at the University of California at Berkeley between 1956 and 1968. In addition, as a landscape architect, she was also known for her various built projects of which the Oakland Museum - done with Dan Kiley - was perhaps the most familiar.

She was born in Wallace, Idaho on July 16, 1904. While she was young her parents died and she was raised by relatives in Idaho and the Bay Area. She attended schools in Piedmont and San Francisco before studying landscape architecture at the University of California - Berkeley. She graduated in 1926. Graduate studies took her to Cornell and the Sorbonne.

She began her practice of landscape architecture in 1928 in Beverly Hills as a draftsman-designer for A.E. Hanson, with later jobs with Helen Van Pelt (later partnership), the Citizen's Planning Council (Los Angeles), the L. A. County Regional Planning Department, Higgins & Root Architects, and Kathryn Imlay Associates (later partnership).

In 1948 she started her own office in Berkeley which she continued until 1968. She was a member of many design-related civic groups. She was a founding member of Tesis, a group of Bay Area designers, planner and thinkers that early-on saw the need for humanistic and comprehensive planning. She wrote a number of articles and received a number of professional honors and design awards. In 1972 she was elected a Fellow of the ASLA.

Gerry's particular talent as a landscape architect was the visual combination of plants - what we call planting design. She had the incredible ability to organize plants into a coherent visual statement. In her classes, Gerry stressed the need to see and arrange plants according to their physical characteristics - colors, textures, size and shape. Her combinations of plants were often unexpected but always appropriate. In some sense, her visual "salad" was every bit the equal of a great meal at a three-star restaurant.

The Oakland Museum was the best known example of her art. Although Dan Kiley was the designated landscape architect, Gerry Scott administered the local aspects of the project including the plant selection and a myriad of horticultural and construction details. Unfortunately over the last twenty years the garden at the Museum has declined and some of the original rich plant palette has been lost. About five years ago she helped to form a committee to renovate the gardens - a renovation that will help to duplicate some of the wonder of the original design.

We will miss Gerry's keen understanding of plants, her good sense of design and her sharp mind. Bon voyage!



GERALDINE KNIGHT SCOTTLANDSCAPE ARCHITECTEDUCATION

BS, Landscape Architecture, U.C. Berkeley, 1926  
 Graduate studies in Art, Architecture, Landscape Design, Cornell University, 1926 - 28.  
 Travel & Study in Europe, principally in Italy, France, and Spain, 1930-31. Courses at the Sorbonne, Paris, and Academia della Arts, Rome.  
 Extension travel in Western Europe 1939, 1958, 1970, '75, '76, '77. Mexico, Guatemala, Peru 1968, Japan, 1954, '55, '81.

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

Mostly in Central California, offices in Marin Co., San Jose, Palo Alto, Berkeley, 1933 - 1968

TEACHING

San Jose Adult Education, 1943 - 48  
 Lecturer, Department of Landscape Architecture, U.C.B., 1952 - 1968. Courses in planting design and landscape perception.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Member, Berkeley Civic Art Commission 7 years  
 Chairman, Design Review Committee, University Avenue.  
 Member, Waterfront Review Committee  
 Member, Designer Selection Committee  
 Member, Advisory Board, Oakland Museum  
 Member, & past president, Berkeley Civic Art Foundation

HONORS

Fellow, American Society of Landscape Architects '72  
 Who's Who in the West - since 1974  
 Distinguished Member, Sigma Lambda Alpha, Landscape Architectural Honor Society.

MISC.

Advisory Council, College of Art, Architecture, and Planning, Cornell University, two terms  
 Advisory Committee, U.C. Extension, new three year Certificate Program in Landscape Architecture.

INTERESTS

Arts and Crafts of all nations. Interest in textiles from first trip to Southwest in 1935. Modest collection of Navajo rugs which led to first courses at Pacific Basin School of Textile Arts in 1974.

BIOGRAPHICAL DATATHE COUNCIL OF FELLOWS  
AMERICAN SOCIETY OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTSDate March 29, 1977NAME: Geraldine Knight SCOTT  
First Middle LastBORN: Wallace Idaho July 16, 1904  
City/Town State/Country Date

ADDRESSES (St., P. O. Box, Rt. No.; City/Town, Zip; (X) Preferred mailing address):

( ) 1130 Sterling Ave., Berkeley, CA 94708

( ) \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE NUMBERS: Residence (415) 843-8722 Office \_\_\_\_\_  
Area Code Number Area Code NumberNAME OF SPOUSE (~~AND CHILDREN~~): Mellier G. SCOTT

EDUCATION (College/University/Other):

<u>University of California - Berkeley</u>	<u>BS</u>	<u>1926</u>
	Degree(s)	Dates
<u>Cornell University</u>		<u>1927-28</u>
	Degree(s)	Dates
<u>UC Extension - (Chinese Art)</u>		<u>1935-36</u>
	Degree(s)	Dates
<u>Sorbonne - Paris, France</u>		<u>1930</u>

TRAVEL/STUDY (Where, When and What):

<sup>5 mos.</sup>  
1939 Italy, France, Spain <sup>30 months</sup> 1930-31 - most of historic villas + gardens in  
Belgium, Holland, France, Italy, Greece, Russia, Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Eng.

EMPLOYMENT: (Specify only relevant; e.g., nursery, contracting, teaching, related professional [e.g. engineering], public or private professional)

<u>Firm, Institution or Agency</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Dates</u>
<u>AE Hanson - Beverly Hills, Calif.</u>	<u>Draftsman-designer</u>	<u>1928 - 29</u>
<u>Helen Van Pelt - San Anselmo, "</u>	<u>"</u>	<u>1933 - 34</u>
<u>Van Pelt - Knight (partnership)</u>		<u>1935 - 39</u>
<u>Citizens' Planning Council - Los Angeles</u>	<u>Executive Secretary</u>	<u>1940 - 41</u>
<u>LA County Regional Planning Dept</u>		<u>1941 - 42</u>
<u>Higgins + Root, Architects - San Jose, Calif.</u>	<u>Draftsman</u>	<u>1943</u>
<u>San Jose Adult Education - taught courses in home + planning</u>	<u>community</u>	<u>1943 - 46</u>
<u>" Opened my own office - as landscape arch.</u>		<u>1946</u>
<u>Moved to Palo Alto - Kathryn Imlay Assoc</u>		<u>1947 - 48</u>
<u>Berkeley Geraldine Knight Scott, L.A. in Berkeley since</u>		<u>1952 - 1948 - 1968</u>

Univ. of Calif., Berkeley - 1/2 time - 1956 - 1968

BUSINESS ASSOCIATIONS (Partnership, Corp., Other):

	Position	Dates
Van Pelt - Knight - partnership		1935 - 1939
SCOTT + IMLAY - associates		1947 + 48
Lecturer - Dept. of L.A. University of Calif - 1/2 time		1956 - 1968

MAJOR EMPHASIS OF PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE OR EMPLOYMENT:

Please comment below or on a separate page regarding your most significant professional interests and list the major types of work or emphasis of your professional practice, or of your role as a teacher, administrator or employee of an agency of government.

My main concern was always in solving the particular problem presented by each job, i.e. "fitting the piece of land for human use and enjoyment" which I agree that "although landscape architecture is an art, one must proceed as though it were a science."

FELLOWSHIP ELECTION CATEGORIES:

Executed Works of L.A. + Professional School Instruction

EXAMPLES OF WORK AND PROJECT RESPONSIBILITIES (use separate sheet if necessary):

Project	Location	Owner
( ) Harold Lloyd Estate	Beverly Hills	
( ) Living Plant Exhibit - Pacific House	Golden Gate Exposition, S.F.	1933
( ) <sup>public</sup> Eastfield Union High School	San Jose, Calif.	also many elementary schools
( ) 7 Professional zone offices	in Santa Clara County, Calif.	
( ) Many private gardens	in S.F. Bay Region	most of which have changed hands - some several times.
( )		
( ) Oakland Museum roof garden	(Don Riley, L.A.)	executive L.A.
( )		

(Indicate availability of drawings and photos by check (X)).

LOCATION OF PROFESSIONAL RECORDS (Books, Drawings, Photos, etc.):

at my home studio - 1130 Sterling Ave., Berkeley

(Office, home or institution with address)

## PROFESSIONAL REGISTRATIONS (Give State, Certificate No. and Year):

California # 537, 1954

## ASLA OFFICES:

Section: Northern Calif. Chapter 1963 - 73 approx.  
Membership Application Review

Office	Dates	Office	Dates	Office	Dates
Chapter:	<u>Secretary</u>	<u>when Glenn Hall was President</u>	<u>1937 or 38</u>		
	Office	Dates	Office	Dates	Office
National:					
	Office	Dates	Office	Dates	Office

Nominations for national offices with dates:

Important Committees/Task Forces. Give dates and note if Chairperson;

Women in Landscape Architecture 1974 - 75 ?

## HOBBIES:

Art History fiber art.  
Travel - Makremi + weaving - gardening

## BIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES (Specify and if possible, enclose copy):

Who's Who in America + Who's Who in the West  
Oral History Division, Bancroft Library, U.C. Berkeley  
A 20-minute <sup>video</sup> tape was recently made by Ruthie Video, S.

Geraldine K. Scott

Signature for the Record

N. B. If insufficient space, use additional pages. A cover letter on your professional stationery, a copy of office brochure and a photo with date taken and permission to use would be useful for record purposes. Notes about other Fellows, former employers, associates, friends, schoolmates, etc., would be appreciated.



## HONORS AND AWARDS (Including special service to state or nation):

Calif. Chapter AIA - Honor Award - 1953  
 City of San Mateo - Beautification Award (Best Place) 1967  
 Calif. Council of Landscape Architects - Citation 1975  
 Distinguished Member - Honor So. of Sigma Lambda Alpha 1981  
 COMMUNITY OR OTHER PUBLIC SERVICES (Offices held, etc.):  
 Member - Civic Art Commission, Berkeley, Calif. Sept '63 - Feb '70  
 Design Review Committee + Waterfront Development Com.  
 Bd - Civic Art Foundation of Berkeley - Pres. 3 yrs.  
 Bd - Pacific Basin School of Textile Arts - Berkeley - 1980 -

PUBLICATIONS: (Indicate (A) for Article, (B) for Book. If listings are more than the spaces allow, place all on separate sheet and so indicate below.)

Title	Publisher	Dates
(A) <u>Planting Design for Bldg. Groups</u>	<u>Space Mag.</u> <sup>LA Dept. of Pub. Works</sup>	1956
(1) <u>Highway Aesthetics</u>	<u>LA Quarterly</u>	Oct. 1957
( ) <u>Magnolias in the Landscape</u>	<u>Calif. Hort Journal</u>	1962
( ) <u>Unitarian Church of Berkeley</u>	<u>L.A. Quarterly</u>	Oct. 1963
( ) <u>Planting Design</u>	<u>Calif. Spring Garden Show</u>	1965
( ) <u>Horticulture on the Roof</u>	<u>Calif. Hort Journal</u>	1969

MILITARY SERVICE: None

Branch of Service	Rank	Area of Service	Dates

## PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS:

ASLA - Dec 1937 - Dec 1942 <sup>reinstated a Fellow 1972</sup>  
 California Assoc. of Landscape Architects - <sup>reinstated July 1961</sup>  
 Alpha Alpha Gamma 1925 - later Assoc. of Women in Architecture  
 California Roadside Council  
 " Horticultural Society - since founding in 1935  
 Honor Society of Sigma Lambda Alpha - 1981



I     EARLY LANDSCAPE IMPRESSIONS, COEUR D'ALENE, IDAHO; COLFAX,  
WASHINGTON; HAWAII, AND SAN FRANCISCO

In my mind's eye, places are more clearly defined than faces.

Wallace, Idaho, where I was born on the 16th of July, 1904 is known today mainly as a lunch stop on the Yellowstone Trail. It is situated on a shelf in a heavily-forested, steep-sided canyon northwest of the continental divide in the panhandle of Idaho. In the early 1900's it was a prosperous, small, mining town. I recall its contour streets surfaced with gray mine tailings, and the wooden sidewalks and steps down the steep hillside from our house to the main street. I would often gather mushrooms at the edge of the talus slopes at the mouth of a silver mine a few blocks away.

My father was an attorney for both the mines and the lumbering interests, a corporation lawyer. In 1909 he opened an office in Coeur d'Alene and my family moved from Wallace to Coeur d'Alene, a much larger town on the lower end of a large lake with the same French name, which owes its prosperity to the lumber mills on its shores. In that area, the valley floor is flat and clothed with Western yellow pines. The bold pattern of the red-brown bark of those trees is as vivid as the smell and the bittersweet taste of the gum of spruce trees most children loved to chew.

We lived in a rather ordinary two-story house in the center of town. My mother taught me the names and seasons of the wildflowers as a pupil in the nature study classes she conducted in the park across from our house. The park extended to the lake shore, perhaps a block or two away.

In an alley behind our house was a stable where we kept horses. My mother and father were good riders. Sunday recreation was going to either polo matches or horse races. Fine horse flesh was greatly admired in Idaho and all around the Northwest. My mother had a horse named Girlie that she could either ride or drive. It pulled a little two-wheeled cart with wicker sides and a couple of seats. We used to go out in the cart to get strawberries and pine mushrooms. Perhaps a block or two behind the stable the pine woods began.

The Coeur d'Alene National Forest which covers a large section of northern Idaho is considered to be one of the most beautiful conifer forests in the world. It is a mixed stand including the deciduous conifer, the Western larch or tamarack, which allows more light and consequent undergrowth than a pure stand and is, therefore, more tolerant of other species. There is an abundance of berried shrubs--huckleberry, thimbleberry, black caps and service berry--especially in the mountain meadows and burned-over areas.

As a child, even though I had not learned the words tolerant and intolerant, I knew what they meant in an ecological sense. Around Coeur d'Alene, on flat country at the lower end of the lake, there was a pure stand of Western yellow pines which tolerates no undergrowth to speak of because the rosin in the needles inhibits growth. Besides wild strawberries, brake ferns, and thistles at the edges of clearings, there are few other ground-covering plants. In my college forestry class, years later, my professor would end his lectures with the dictum, "Be a redwood, not a yellow pine."

I spent my summers at Chatcolet Lake, where as little kids we played tag, running over the booms of logs. I grew up playing around the water and with all the chips that come from the mills around there. One of my greatest delights was playing with these wonderful smooth chips which I used to build boats, houses, and fantastic constructions. I grew up seeing and understanding the difference between good and bad lumbering practices, such as selective versus clear cutting, and summer versus winter cutting which left high stumps to be revealed by the spring thaw.

I remember one time my mother took me for a ride in the woods. We drove a logging road deep into a forest and there was a marvelous, elegant log cabin that the logging camp had built for themselves. This huge cabin was made of enormous logs, probably Douglas fir, a couple of feet in diameter, that were simply split in two with polished surfaces. The inside of the cabin was glistening with that kind of orange wood, which I don't find attractive today, but I recall it then as being beautiful. There was a second floor, a balcony, and the steps were constructed of half logs. They were big steps, and I was small, and I wanted to go up and down them, but they didn't have any railing and I can remember having to pull myself up. A thunderstorm came up and we were caught there and had to stay overnight and drive out the next day. It was magical to be deep in the forest inside this great building built of huge logs.

Thunder and lightning storms are common in the Northwest. Streak lightning, which often occurs on sultry, clear evenings, is more spectacular than fireworks. It was beautiful to watch but deadly in effect, causing many forest fires. I recall our having to abandon camp on the St. Joe River, packing our grub into our boats, and rowing to safety to the sound of roaring fire. Once the fire leapt across the river, propelled by a whirlwind.

The worst of all forest fires in the Northwest occurred in the summer of 1910, the year of Halley's Comet. I remember seeing the comet as we walked in the park in Coeur d'Alene after dark, the first time I was allowed to stay up that late.

That year was a particularly dry year. The heat lightning was seldom followed by the usual heavy downpour. Many small forest fires sped through the slash left from careless logging, coalescing into one great holocaust which destroyed an area the size of Connecticut. The fire raged to the east of Coeur d'Alene and burned most of the town of Wallace. I recall nothing about the fire but do remember my mother explaining the snow avalanche which followed the next winter.

The winters are long and very cold in northern Idaho, and the lakes sometimes freeze over. Ice-skating and snow-shoeing are popular winter sports, but I was too small and sickly as a child to do more than be pulled on a sled or go for an occasional sleigh ride in a cutter.

We had a huge basement and attic and in the winter we played in either one or the other. In the attic we had old mattresses on the floor and a trapeze. I even had a tricycle that I could ride around in the basement.

Spring was particularly thrilling after a long winter of playing in the house. One winter when I was six or seven, a mysterious bundle wrapped in burlap arrived. It was kept in the basement, not to be opened until spring, which seemed never to come that year. I was told that it was a linden tree, not like any tree I knew.

Finally, after a real thaw, my father dug a large hole on the side of our house, removed all the burlap wrappings, revealing a long grey-brown stick with branches at each end, and planted it in the hole. It was a great disappointment to me after all the talk and reciting about, "Unter dem Linden." (My father was interested in the German poets, as was my mother, who was an elocutionist.)

Perhaps a month later, pale green buds of leaves and flowers appeared, then flowers unlike any I knew and with a special fragrance, which proved that my father and mother were right about a linden tree being a very special tree. When I saw it many years later, it had become a handsome specimen, as tall as the two-story house, with all of the particular qualities that made the German poets praise their beauty.

We spent our summers on one or another of the lakes in the woods of northern Idaho. My Uncle Ben and his family had a houseboat at Chatcolet, a Kootenai Indian reservation near the place where the St. Joe River empties into Coeur d'Alene Lake. The name St. Joe comes from St. Joe, Missouri where my grandparents and other Missouri people who migrated to the Northwest had come from. The Indians owned the land and leased the rights to tie up houseboats to the shore. There were maybe

ten houseboats on Hidden Lake. It wasn't really a boat, but a house on logs which was towed into place, sometimes on the river and sometimes on a hidden side inlet. The Indians let us build a little dock and we had an Evinrude, a rowboat and a canoe hitched to the side.

The houseboat had two rooms--a kitchen, cooking/eating area and one sleeping area where Uncle Ben slept. The rest of us slept in tents on the shore. I spent many summers sleeping in a tent, listening to the lapping of the water and the sounds of the forest.

I learned to swim and row or paddle my own "half-canoe," a small, light flat-bottomed boat made of cedar, all around the edge of that lake when I was nine or ten.

I was often very lonely because there were no other children camping nearby, so I explored by myself, discovering pheasants and beavers at work. There were also many deer; venison and bacon were the only meat we ate. Fish were easy to catch, trout, bass and perch. You just decided what you wanted and fished accordingly.

There were a number of controls on the river, not real dams, but controls of some sort, so that sometimes water backed up and flooded a large portion of land, making shallow lakes where lots of what we called "tulley"--water lilies and various kinds of reeds--grew. The reeds were collected by the Indians for basket-making.

There were large steamboats, side-wheelers and end-wheelers that went all the way from Coeur d'Alene to St. Joe, one way each day. Our great sport was watching these boats go by carrying passengers and freight up and down the river or rowing out to ride the waves made by the stern-wheelers.

We got to Chatcolet by train each summer and then a launch took us over to Uncle Ben's houseboat. The only means of transportation was water transportation, or in the winter, ice skating and snow shoeing. Camping there in the summer was a marvelous experience. Even when I was in college I would go back and spend my summers on that houseboat.

Later, after my parents died in 1911 and my Aunt Dora and Uncle Ben took me to live with them in Colfax, Washington, we still returned each summer to Chatcolet.

My mother didn't stand the cold winters well, so she took me down to California where we spent one winter in Long Beach, and one in Venice. At the beaches in California I discovered sand, shells, and waves. The sea was so very different from the quiet lakes and rivers that I knew.

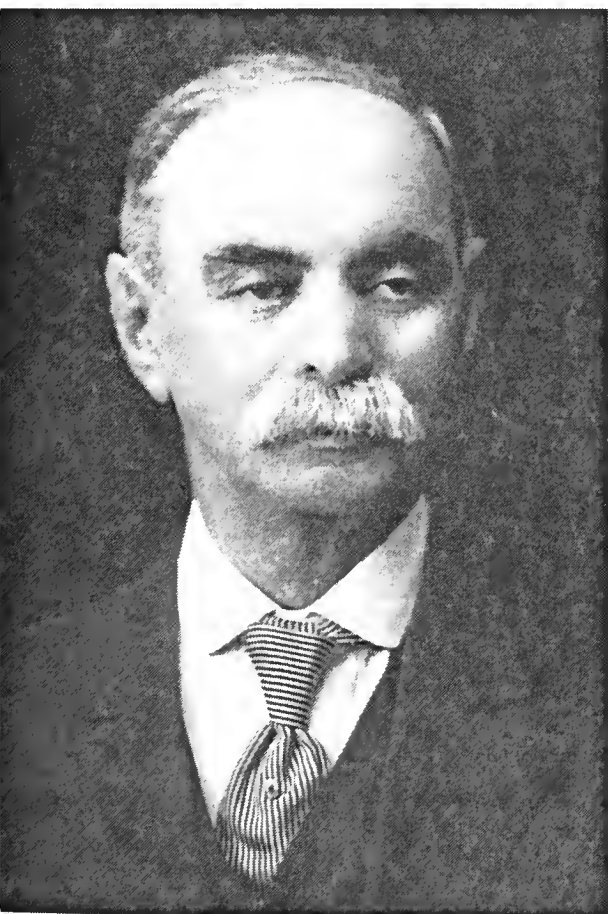
When I was six we spent the winter in Hawaii. Honolulu was then a very small city. I was fascinated by Hawaii which I remember clearly. We stayed in a family hotel, the Pleasanton. It was on an old estate



bove left: Orene Lansdale and H.P. Lansdale Knight,  
geraldine Knight's parents who died in 1911.

bove right: Geraldine Knight Scott, 1907.

elow, left and right: Ben Burgunder and Dora Lansdale  
urgunder, "surrogate parents" until 1914.







with a huge banyan tree with aerial roots which hung down and touched the earth and grew up again covering a large area. This seemed to me to be the biggest thing in the world.

It was dark under the banyan and there were a lot of monkeys chained to it. I was fascinated by that tree, but I was afraid of the monkeys and the way they screeched. My mother used to say, "If you are naughty, I'll put you under the banyan tree." I had never seen anything like it. It was totally different from the conifers, the forest trees that I knew in Idaho.

While in Hawaii, we went several times to a large Japanese garden that I loved. It had little bridges over streams and dwarf trees. It was a fairyland as far as I was concerned, the perfect scale for a child. I can't remember exactly where it is now because the city has changed so much and there are quite a number of old Japanese gardens in Honolulu.

Hawaiian gardens were full of larger and brighter flowers than any I had seen before, as well as unusual fruits, the names of which my mother did not know. We were greeted everywhere with leis of exotic flowers that often smelled so sweet they gave my mother headaches. And the fruits gave me hives. (That was long before I learned about allergies.)

I was not to visit Hawaii again until 1955, when on my way to Japan I stopped to visit two college friends, Bob Thompson, class of '27, and his wife, Catherine. They had an active landscape practice on the Hawaiian Islands. Honolulu was still a small and very friendly city where every tourist was greeted with leis of flowers and given free rides about the city. There were many more than two hotels, mostly along the beach. The old Pleasanton, where I had stayed as a child, was gone, but the great banyan tree helped me to find its location.

We returned from Honolulu in January to a houseful of sickness, ending in the death of both my mother and father in March. We had gone to Hawaii on a ship, my mother, a governess, and me, because my mother wasn't well. She had migraine headaches, or something that was never explained to me. She was very nervous, so the governess was supposed to take care of me.

After we had been there some time, we got a cable--the only means of communication then--saying that my father was very ill, that he had blood poisoning, and we must take the first boat back. It was a freighter. We had not intended to come back until February. I think we had gone in October.

There were no good doctors in Coeur d'Alene, so they sent to Spokane or Seattle or some place for doctors, who came and lived in our house, which made a terrible impression on me as a curious little child. I was always in the way. I was often told to get out of the way.

The smell of chloroform was everywhere, just like a hospital. It killed my goldfish. They had to operate on my father at every joint as the poison moved. In March he was improving when my mother contracted some kind of poisoning, which was called ptomaine, and died within twelve hours. The shock of her death killed my father.

My next strong landscape impressions are of southeastern Washington, foothill country, at a lower elevation than Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. In 1911, my Aunt Dora, my mother's oldest sister, and her husband, Uncle Ben [Burgunder], who had raised three boys, took me to live with them in Colfax, Washington, the county seat of Whitman County, a very productive farming area. This was my first experience in farming country, rolling hills, wheat, and apple orchards.

Uncle Ben, like all my grandparents, was a pioneer. He was born in New York City in 1845 of Bavarian parents--his father was a farmer--who later moved to Cincinnati in the 1880s. Ben left his family at the age of seventeen and joined a pack train coming west in the late Gold Rush period. He made his fortune in the mercantile business in the Northwest, and then interested himself in horticulture. He promoted and developed the Whitman County Fair, and Spokane Interstate Fair. He was president of the Pioneer Association of the Northwest.

He had built a fine Victorian house with a charming garden at the lower end of town near the Palouse River. I went to live with them just before Easter, when violets filled all the cracks in the sidewalk on one side of the house.

That house burned down to the ground two weeks after they took me to live with them. After the fire, we lived in a friend's house at the other end of this little town. Uncle Ben often took me to gather flowers in what everybody referred to as "the old home place." The plants were mostly mature flowering trees and shrubs. Each spring I walked to the other end of town to gather lilacs, violets, fruit blossoms, weigelas, snowballs, bleeding heart, spireas, and peonies.

Uncle Ben was a very warm and affectionate person. He especially liked girls but had never had any daughters. So when I went to live with them he seemed pleased to have a little girl about. As he was a contemporary of both my grandfathers, our relationship was that of a grandchild to a grandfather.

Uncle Ben spent his wintertime months going around visiting farms in eastern Washington to encourage the farmers to exhibit their best produce at the state fair. He became known as the greatest apple judge in the Northwest. He also knew a great deal about grafting fruit trees. How he learned this, I haven't any idea. He had only one arm, having lost his right arm through blood poisoning, but his instructions were so clear that others could make perfect grafts.

He took me on many trips, always treating me as an independent human being, not as a child. We went to Spokane, Walla Walla, Coleville, to various places to see the heads of farm bureaus, which were just starting up then. When we went on those trips we stayed with families, because there weren't suitable hotels, only "public houses" where the drummers, the traveling salesmen, stayed.

Those trips were my introduction to horticulture and farming. My father and mother had both come from farming families and had also liked gardening. But my father hated the farm and was glad to be out of the wheat country of southern Idaho.

The winters in that area were very cold, with snow that came and stayed on for months. At the first thaw, hunts were organized to gather the first buttercups and wild flowers that came up right at the edge of the snow. We would dig up little mats of moss, with the buttercups not yet in bloom, and bring them home, putting them in pots to bloom in the house.

From the time I was a very small child, I loved to make things. May Day was also a wonderful occasion, an excuse to make May baskets for everybody in our neighborhood. We would gather all the flowers, fruit blossoms, bulbs, and violets that were blooming by May Day in that cold climate. Dog-tooth violets, called Easter lilies, grew in great abundance, especially on a local hill on my maternal grandfather's farm near Colfax. My Aunt Dora was a wonderful cook, famous for her candy and preserves. Generous pieces of divinity and fudge were her contribution to my May baskets.

I was teased a great deal in my aunt and uncle's house by three big, teen-aged boys. My Aunt Dora and Uncle Ben were also full of laughter and joshing. It was a very warm family. I remember my cousin Leonard often putting me right. He would say to Aunt Dora, "You're not going to let her go out on the street looking like that, are you?" I could never go out without a hair ribbon, for instance. That was the thing that was proper, and Leonard had a great sense of propriety when he was about seventeen. He didn't want a little urchin around when he was already going with the best girls in town.

Rather suddenly, or so it seemed to me at age ten, Aunt Dora, a strong, handsome woman, became ill and was not able to make her delicious noodles and gooseberry dumplings. My Aunt Ruby, my mother and Aunt Dora's sister, came up from Oakland, California, to visit and cook the meals while Aunt Dora rested.

I was destined to be a traveller, to experience many landscapes, for in the spring of 1914 my Aunt Dora died. My Aunt Ruby took me to live with her, and her husband, Uncle Frank, in Oakland, California.





Above: Ruby and Frank Humphreys with guests (Geraldine Knight Scott to the right of her uncle Frank) at a 50th anniversary celebration, 1951. The Humphreys brought Geraldine to California.

Right: Geraldine as a student at Girls' High, San Francisco.





## II OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA, 1914; THE PANAMA-PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL EXPOSITION, 1915

From the small mining town of Wallace to the lumber mill town of Coeur d'Alene, Idaho to the town of Colfax, Washington in the heart of the inland empire, all in the Northwest but distinctly different landscapes, each move was to a larger town.

What a change the move to Oakland was! From the snow-covered landscape to the lupine and poppy-covered hills of central California. My squeals of delight over the orange poppies in bloom along the railroad track prompted the Southern Pacific conductor to gather some for me when the train stopped at a siding. He presented them to me in the dining car. The excitement of travel muffled the shock of transition to yet another foster home.

Aunt Ruby and her husband lived on a corner in a brown bungalow a block off Piedmont Avenue. Two plant nurseries filled the center of the block. There was a small garden, or so it seemed after Uncle Ben's "old home place." There were no forests nearby, no lake or open fields, few vacant lots to play in. Instead there were bare, rounded hills, golden brown with dark green oaks and toyons in the canyons where we went to picnic. I wondered why the bare hills where lupine and poppies grew were called meadows. They were not at all like the saucer-shaped mountain meadows I knew in the Northwest.

I missed the winter snow and felt sorry for my schoolmates who had never even seen a snowflake or had the fun of making a snowman. The thrill of spring with its miracle of growing tips and swelling buds opening to palest green leaves and new flowers appearing was also missing. There seemed to be some flowers all the time in my aunt's small garden, or on the plants growing in cans in the nearby nurseries.

My aunt and uncle's home was entirely different than my home in Colfax. Aunt Ruby and Uncle Frank were non-talkers who had no children, and their friends had no children. I was very lonely there. I made friends at school, but my aunt wasn't well so she seldom entertained my friends.

I liked school and did well in Piedmont Grammar School, skipping three half-grades to catch up with my age group. The school was a large, two-storied building on upper Piedmont Avenue. There were different teachers for each subject. My class teacher didn't have a row of apples across her desk, and seemed surprised that I brought her one every day. In Colfax, children took two apples to school, one for the teacher and one to eat at recess. I decided that this difference in custom was because California apples weren't as good as Washington apples, a standard put in my mind by my Uncle Ben. They certainly didn't taste as good as the Winesaps, Jeffreys, Bellflowers or Banana apples I was used to.

The greatest thing about living in Oakland at that period was the Panama-Pacific International Exposition, then under construction in San Francisco. It was a very great fair, remarkable that it was built during the First World War. (The U.S.A. had not yet entered the war.) That exposition made a tremendous impression on me. All the outstanding artists, architects, and sculptors in this area were involved in it.

My guardian, my father's former law partner, thought it would be nice for me to own a share in that exposition. So he bought me a \$100 dollar share. It was the only world's fair that ever was a financial success. This one paid a dividend, actually. It was a good investment, and everyone who owned a share got a set of three or four volumes on the history of the exposition. I have given my set to the University of Washington at Seattle. The University of California and the Oakland Museum already had copies.

The Berkeley pier was built by the Key Route System to take people to the exposition. A streetcar ran out to the end of that pier where you took a ferry which docked in a special slip directly at the exposition, now the Marina.

I went to the fair many times. After the exposition opened, I went first with my class. Later, I went by myself on Saturdays. My aunt and uncle would pin a note on me and put me on the train so I could go to the exposition and stay all day by myself. They would come over in the evening and meet me at the Australian Building, my favorite. We would have dinner and then stay to watch the marvelous fireworks. I did this so many times that I really knew the whole fair.

It was an historically great, magnificent exposition. I have always liked processes, and many were exhibited in the food machinery building. The Kellogg Company had an exhibit showing how Post Toasties were made, for instance. There were all sorts of things that were fascinating to me.

The gardens were outstanding. The only remnant of that exposition is the Palace of Fine Arts in San Francisco. It appeared to be surrounded by a very high wall or hedge which was composed of flats of



iceplant with wire over them to form a rosy flowered hedge. A watering system that trickled water from the top kept the plants alive and blooming. It was in scale with the palace, so it was probably four feet thick and fifteen feet high. (According to the architect, it was ten feet thick and fifty feet high, but I doubt it.) When the iceplant was in bloom, there was a magenta haze, increased by the silver gray of the foliage. It was a stunning effect. I remember that hedge just as clearly as if I had done it myself. Such things made very vivid impressions on me.

My aunt and uncle used to spend the summers at the beach or on the Russian River, one or two at Santa Cruz. One year we went to Yosemite; another to Crater Lake. All of my relatives were interested in the natural environment and in seeing the national parks. My father and mother had gone to Yosemite in 1909. They bought a large sepia print of the grisly giant in Mariposa Grove which is now an historic photograph that I have given to the Oakland Museum.

After I came to live in Oakland, we made a trip one time to Mammoth Lakes on the east side of the Sierra. We went by a narrow-gauge railroad into Nevada and continued by four-horse team. We had been invited by an uncle, a farmer, on my mother's side who lived in Inyo County, a funny old bachelor. He met us with his four-horse team. We went as far as the horses could pull the wagon and then rode the horses on up to Silver Lake. There are many Silver Lakes, but this one where we camped and fished is near Mammoth Lakes. These mountains were like those I knew in Idaho but even more rugged. I enjoyed that mountain trip where the meadows were full of wildflowers and we could catch all of the trout we wanted. We caught a whole barrel full of trout, salted them down and brought them back to Uncle Minor's place near Laws.

In 1917 my eighth grade civics teacher, Miss Webster, in a spirit of patriotism, assigned as a class project the planting of a Victory Garden. We dug up the softball field and planted it to cabbages which we sold at a profit. We were each asked to put in one dollar to buy tools and seeds. We children supplied all the labor. The earth was packed hard, so the boys did the picking and digging and we girls did the raking and planting. I am still trying to understand the value of that term's hard work.

We sold our shares to the next class for two dollars, making a one hundred percent profit on our investment. The next class sold them for four dollars. This went on for four years, until the parents rebelled and refused to give their children eight dollars to buy the shares and the Victory Garden idea stopped. The war was over.

That was an example of inflation, which we still don't know how to control. It's the sort of thing that happens in accumulative profit, a kind of wartime profiteering really. And, of course we learned nothing about civics, only a little about economics and victory gardening.

I was graduated from Piedmont Grammar School in June, 1918 and started in the newly-completed Oakland Technical High School that September. It had ramps instead of steps, an interesting school design for that time. I only went there one term because my uncle, who had been a commuter working in San Francisco for the Southern Pacific as head of the scrip department, was made manager of the Pacific Union Club and was required to live in San Francisco.

### III SAN FRANCISCO, 1918-1922

The move to San Francisco in 1918, a place always referred to as "the City" by Oaklanders, was to yet another totally different environment. There we lived in a very small apartment in a five-story apartment building. From that time on I did not have a room of my own. I had a closet behind a folding bed, a restricted kind of living for a teen-aged girl.

The building had an elevator and had a dumb-waiter, which I used to send up sand for my cat scooped from a vacant lot two blocks away. As I walked or rode a street car the twelve blocks to Girls' High School (true to its name, for girls only), I passed no single houses with gardens, no trees, no shops until Polk Street, only solid rows of grey or tan buildings with tiers of bay windows.

Girls High School was the only girls' public school west of Chicago. There had been many of these segregated schools in the East, but there was only this one, started by a Dr. Scott, who was an M.D. as well as an educator. It was a very fine school scholastically, very largely Jewish, about ninety-five percent Jewish, as I learned.

I was a gentile in a Jewish school. From this I learned something about discrimination. My Uncle Ben was Jewish. He had become a Christian to marry my Aunt Dora, who belonged to the Congregational Church. I had never heard anything about discrimination. Their sons, who were half-Jewish, used to tell terribly funny stories about Jewish people. Uncle Ben told the funniest ones.

I recognized my uncle's Jewish traits, but I only learned that I was a gentile when, in my senior year, I was nominated for president of my class and one of the teachers, Miss Armour, said to me, "You know, you will be defeated." I didn't know why; I wasn't exceedingly popular, but I had lots of friends, and it was somebody else's idea to put me up for president. Well, I got exactly five percent of the vote, and she told me, "You understand why." Afterwards, yes, I did.

Daughters of the very prominent families in San Francisco went there, very bright girls. Many of the teachers were Jewish. They were fine high school instructors, the best. I have no complaint about my high school, for I had some really superior teachers.

My first friend was from a French family. Her father had started the first Poodle Dog Restaurant on Polk Street. From her I learned about the early French colony in San Francisco, who had established the French Hospital, the little French Theatre, the City of Paris department store on Union Square, old St. Marie's, the French Catholic church, many French restaurants, cafes, and bakeries. She knew "the City," guided me over the hills, taught me to ride the cable cars, to shop for special foods in Chinatown or the Italian fish markets in North Beach.

The City was intriguing, more interesting than Girls' High School. We often walked from Girls' High, which was on Scott and Geary Streets, out to Golden Gate Park after class. In the park I felt at home. I could show my friend trees and flowers I knew, teach her to row on Stow Lake, how to ride a pony or discover the deer, antelope and buffalo in the paddock. Sometimes we went to the Steinhart Aquarium where I recognized fish I had seen from glass-bottomed boats at Catalina or Hawaii. The tree ferns and Japanese tea garden also recalled Honolulu.

Prompted by our history of art teacher, we went often to the de Young Museum. We knew every painting, sculpture, tapestry, and period room there and learned our preferences.

Another one of my great delights was Chinatown. I was allowed to browse in Chinatown all by myself. Marie and I walked Chinatown from one end to the other, and knew many of the shopkeepers. We went in to ogle the porcelains, silks, herbs and foods in curious packages.

There were wonderful, beautiful things that came into San Francisco's Chinatown at that time. One of my cherished memories is of a beautiful ceramic rabbit with a Ming yellow glaze that I adored. I would go in just to look at it. I have always thought that rabbits are very beautiful in form and have a real art quality in outline as well as form. I would look at that rabbit over and over again. I don't remember how much it was, but I couldn't possibly have ever owned it.

The very elderly Chinese man who had the shop knew what I wanted to see whenever I came in, and if it wasn't out on display, he would bring it out for me to admire. One day when I went to see it, he told me he had sold it, and I think he felt just as bad as I did that I couldn't see the rabbit anymore. So he asked me to stay for tea which he served to me. I was just a high school girl and this old Chinese man frightened me a little when he did this, but I slowly realized he had meant to console me by serving tea.

Another fascinating shop on a side street carried only things made of bamboo or fibre--elegant baskets, screens, mats, utensils and furniture. There were bamboo poles from fishing pole size to some four or five inches in diameter, some still pale green, golden or brown-black.

My Aunt Ruby was fascinated by Indian baskets. She had learned to make them by staying with Indians in Shasta County, and had acquired a great collection from thimble-sized to huge cone-shaped storage baskets. When I first lived with my aunt and uncle in Oakland, I slept in a room with Indian baskets covering the walls. It wasn't my idea of a bedroom, but I slowly learned to like them and appreciate them as art forms, not just artifacts.

My Aunt Ruby also loved to browse Grant Avenue and all the side streets. She had great native skill at all crafts and taught me sewing, knitting, crocheting, embroidery, and aroused an interest in weaving, tapestry, and Persian rugs.

Our teachers at Girls' High were cultured urbanites. Our French teachers acted in the French Theatre. The English teachers were the equal of any college professors I met later. And Tommy McGlynn, my drawing teacher, was an artist of some reputation. He assigned problems that were quite abstract for that time and always two-dimensional. I wanted to translate those problems into a model of something, or a collage, to apply the principles he was teaching to something.

I established quite a rapport with Tommy McGlynn. He, I think, must have suggested that I go into architecture, or fashion design because clothes, texture, and color always interested me. I already was making my own clothes because my aunt had taught me to sew when I was in grammar school. Both Tommy McGlynn and my history of art teacher planted the ideas which directed my life into a design profession.

But it was my math teacher, Miss Noonan, who one day in our senior year asked the questions, "What are you going to do after your education at Girls' High School? What do you want to become?"

I always knew I was going to go to college and I said I was going to go to the University of California. Education had been very important to my mother and father. I was imprinted with this idea long before, because there was no question in my mind about going to U.C. I loved school, I loved learning, and there was no thought of not going to the university.

When Miss Noonan asked what I was going to study, I said, "landscape architecture." I am sure that I had never said the words, "landscape architect," until Miss Noonan asked her questions. The term "landscape gardener" I knew because that was John McLaren's title and he was a pioneer friend of my Uncle Ben. The profession of architecture might have been suggested by Tommy McGlynn, who had said my geometric patterns were

architectural. But I did not want to be an architect. I wanted to combine nature and design.

That I was going to study landscape architecture was a great joke--the class roared with laughter--but when Miss Noonan asked if I needed to earn my living, I said, yes, I did, because I had a very strong sense of not wanting to be dependent. I knew that my aunt and uncle were given a small sum to take care of me--I think about \$50 a month--and I did not want them to support me.

Also, my guardian, a very fine man, Mr. Richmond Strong, who was head of the trust department at the bank in San Francisco, had set me up at age twelve with a bank account. He gave me \$5,000 to manage. (My aunt was always sure she was going to die, so she did everything to contribute to my being independent. I had already had two mothers die, and she thought she would be the third mother to die. However, she lived to be eighty-three.

They did everything to make me independent, financially and psychologically. I was always allowed to do everything I wanted to do. There was never any debate. They were not over-protective in any way. If I wanted to do something, they allowed me to do it. My friends' mothers would always say, "If Geraldine can go, you can go." My aunt always trusted me, and my uncle too. My aunt allowed me to make decisions. I had to buy all my own clothes, and if I bought unwisely I had to wear the clothes just the same. So I learned how to manage money at a very early age. At eighteen, when I reached legal maturity, I owned a few bonds which were put in the safe deposit box, so I learned just how much money I had and that I would have to spend some capital to go to college.

Well, Miss Noonan asked if I would like to meet a landscape architect, and arranged to take me to meet Stephen Child, a retired landscape architect living in San Francisco at that time. One afternoon after school she took me to have tea with him. All the way there she was saying, "Now you can see what a difficult life he has had, that you can't make a living as a landscape architect." When we got there, I found that he had a perfectly beautiful apartment with lovely books and paintings. He was a very polished and charming gentleman.

I can't remember anything he said to me, but he didn't frighten me or awe me in any way. He was just a very nice person like my Uncle Ben. He encouraged me. Although he didn't know very much about the University of California's course in landscape design, he thought it was certainly the place for me to study the subject. I think it was inevitable that ultimately my interest in art and nature would come together in landscape architecture because my most vivid memories of childhood and adolescence are visual impressions of places and not of people.

#### IV UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, 1922-26

On registration day, August 1922, I crossed the bay on a Southern Pacific ferry, rode the big red car up Shattuck Avenue to University, and walked up to Agriculture Hall. The campus began at Oxford Street with lawns, groups of small conifers, some redwoods along Strawberry Creek, and large oaks and eucalyptus groves on the south side.

Considering my chosen profession an art, and the fact that my weak point in high school had been chemistry, I was dismayed to find landscape design in the College of Agriculture. Here was a long list of science prerequisites--chemistry, physics, botany, zoology, genetics, forestry, soil technology--in addition to the college-wide requirements in English and American history or American institutions. (I chose American institutions or "White House Scandals" as students called it.) As much as I resented the laboratory hours spent in those agricultural sciences, I learned much that would be combined under the term ecology, coined years later.

I found a room in a boarding house (there were no dorms) on Le Conte Avenue, north of the campus, which extended from Hearst Avenue south to Sather Gate, with "Drobe's" eatery on the southwest corner of Telegraph Avenue where Sproul Plaza is now. On the northside, only one drug store, which is still there.

There were only two girls registered in agriculture that year, one in animal husbandry, and I was the only one in landscape architecture. That made me the only girl in several classes. Many of my fellow students were veterans, years older, who both teased and frightened me. Although I had just graduated from an all-girls' high school, in my earlier years I had lived with older boy cousins and a brother six years older, so I was used to teasing, but not to some of the tricks and practical jokes the veterans played in chemistry, such as spraying dilute acid on sweaters and sox.

My first class in landscape design was plant materials, taught by Katherine D. Jones, a Victorian spinster who always wore a hat and gloves and carried a large reticule from which she produced small tablets, pencils, extra gloves, toe rubbers, boxes of raisins, band-aids, and other miscellany.

From experience, Katherine D. Jones or "Katey," as we referred to her, believed that a student had to meet a plant by name ten times to know it. All of her students really learned plant materials, more than five hundred of them, how to pronounce their Latin names and recognize them at various stages of growth, as well as their soil and water requirements, their natural associates, and climatic tolerances. We made notebooks with leaf prints of every plant.

K.D.J. also assisted Professor [John] Gregg in teaching history of landscape architecture. I still have a large notebook compiled in that course, with notes from assigned readings, and prints of the great gardens of the world, including the Japanese. We made small scale drawings of Italian villas, Spanish gardens and patios, and French chateaux.

Several books had already been published on the gardens of California, and added to the library, which Professor Gregg had started and continued to stock with most of the books then in print on the young profession of landscape architecture. Hubbard & Kimball was our bible, and I still find it a good text, though dated in writing style.

In my junior year, I had a first course in mechanical drawing, given in the old architecture building, followed by descriptive geometry, shades and shadows (Ernest Born, Bill Wurster and Mike Goodman were all teaching assistants), perspective, freehand drawing and watercolor, the last two from Raymond Jeans. Life class was made memorable by Helen Wills, who was already a tennis champion and very good at drawing action poses. Other courses given in the "Ark" were history of architecture and civic art by Eugen Neuhaus, who had a reputation as a painter and a great traveller.

Landscape design problems varied from small home gardens to large estates. After the debris from the Berkeley fire of September 18, 1923 was cleared, some residents north of the campus rebuilt only parts of their large, shingled houses, leaving basement areas exposed. Professor Gregg redesigned many of these into patios or outdoor living areas and gave these sites to his design classes. They were entirely practical, real-life problems.

I recall the six weeks summer trip of 1925 as the best of my four years at U.C.B. Eight students and three professors, Gregg, Shepherd and Jones, made all-day trips to San Francisco, the Peninsula, and Marin County. We went to Stockton and Sacramento to see subdivisions, parks, estates, meet park superintendents, arborists and practicing landscape



architects. In Fresno, we spent two days at the California Nursery where its founder, Charles Roeding, explained the complexity of supplying the rapidly growing demand for orchards, vineyards, roses and hundreds of ornamental plants.

In San Francisco we studied the subdivisions of St. Francis Wood, Ingleside Terrace and Balboa Terrace, Golden Gate Park, and the James Flood town houses designed by [Frederick Law] Olmsted.

We were given a full course in park design in Stockton by Victor Anderson, class of 1922, already a landscape architect and park superintendent for the city. We visited three parks in various stages of development, the municipal baths, the golf and country club, and some modest private gardens.

It was my first trip to southern California since childhood winters spent in Long Beach and Venice. In Santa Barbara we stayed for several days at the YWCA designed by Julia Morgan, and ate in Mexican restaurants in the Paseo. Ralph Stevens, a former teacher at U.C.B, took us to see twenty large estates in and around Montecito. The estates were rich in architectural detail and elegant in concept. Many were already being exploited by the movie industry as settings for epics.

On the San Francisco Peninsula we photographed, sketched and made notes on fourteen already well-developed estates, including the Bourn estate, Filoli; Senator Phelan's home, Montalvo, in Saratoga; and both the W.H. Crocker and C.T. Crocker estates in San Mateo. Photos of all of these had already been published in a book, Stately Homes of California, by Peter Garnett.

Most of the houses were English or French in design. A few, such as Montalvo and the R.S. Moore garden by Professor Gregg, were more Mediterranean in detail. We also saw several gardens in Belvedere, and the Phoebe A. Hearst estate in Livermore Valley.

In Pasadena and Oak Knoll we visited estates sensitively designed by Katherine Bashford, Florence Yock, Paul Theine--less lavish than those in Montecito, somewhat more refined and appealing. The Huntington Library and Gardens included a large cactus and succulent collection and an extensive Japanese garden. We also visited another large oriental garden in Hollywood owned by the Berkheimers.

Our trip included many gardens in Los Angeles, Hollywood, Beverly Hills, Palos Verdes, and finally San Diego for a study of Balboa Park, and a meeting with Charles Diggs, the landscape architect. We also visited several large nurseries. We even crossed the border to Tijuana for a final fling of Mexican food and tequila.

In looking back, I am amazed that Professor Gregg, who had only come to California in 1913 to found the Department of Landscape Architecture,

could have made all the connections necessary to give his students this comprehensive overview of the landscape profession in California.

My graduating class had eight people in it--Fred Barlow, Jay Gooch, Bob Stryker, Art Cobbledick, Dana Tyson, Harold Curtis, Beatrice Williams and me. Beatrice was always very good at engineering and construction. After working for Katherine Bashford as a landscape architect in Los Angeles, she went into an engineering office during the war and found she had an aptitude so she stayed with it. Fred Barlow later distinguished himself by working for Katherine Bashford and carrying on with her practice when she retired.

Bob Stryker, a veteran of World War I, a very brilliant and capable fellow, went on to Harvard where he distinguished himself, winning a travelling fellowship. Later we traveled together in Europe. He had always worked since he was a child, was doubtless weakened by the war, got lung cancer or tuberculosis and died at about age forty-six. His last work was making the drawings for the rebuilding of Williamsburg. His renderings and water colors are still shown at Harvard. His friends promoted the sale of his water colors to establish a Robert Stryker Memorial scholarship at U.C. Berkeley.

Two other fellows in that class became landscape contractors. The six fellows all followed the profession in one way or another.

[The following section was deleted at one stage of Mrs. Scott's editing, but is reinserted because of the historical interest of the material.]

Buktenica: It seems to me the most profound people I have known have had a strong horticultural background or a feeling for the natural world. You come with this, and it really goes way back.

Scott: Well, of course, in England this tradition of horticulture is very strong in what was called landscape gardening. The English designers have all had a strong horticulture background. The separation of landscape design from horticulture came about in this country. It's a part of the macho philosophy of this country, I think.

Buktenica: You see that?

Scott: Yes, I do, because I have been through the whole cycle. The profession was quiescent all during the war periods and the Depression. As landscape architects began to get jobs in war housing and broader aspects of the profession, as in the very early days of Olmsted, the profession grew and changed.

Also, the nursery profession had grown, and there was always this thing of calling landscape architects "pansy planters." But the men in the profession wanted to gain status, to get away from that image that had somehow gotten tacked onto them. I see it as definitely a part of this male/female contest.

Buktenica: Pansy is a very symbolic of that because it is very soft and gentle.

Scott: Yes.

Buktenica: And men are not supposed to be soft and gentle.

Scott: Right. So they wanted little or nothing to do with plants. I see it as part of a whole syndrome. As landscape architects got into more and more structural work, and more complex design or larger projects, they found they just didn't have the time or the energy to carry projects through in the degree of detail that planting design requires. So they were very glad to slough it off to any woman employed in an office. If a girl got a job, she was nearly always assigned the planting plans.

Buktenica: In architectural offices girls were given kitchens to design, and in landscape architecture it was the planting?

Scott: Right, it was home-making. Women were supposed to have a feeling for it. I, having taught the subject, don't agree. Planting design requires a design sense, an interest in form, texture and color. I don't see any relation to sex at all, nor ever did, because many men are artists and often more sensitive than women.

Buktenica: You have, I think, a profound understanding of architectural space and the way plants define landscape space. I really learned that working with you. But I also picked up the attitude from other professionals that you were a woman and your really strong point was plant material.

Scott: Well, I know that architects--a good many of them for a long time, and I think many still--looked upon a landscape architect as somebody who makes a setting for buildings. Also, they know that they do not know plants, so they think that's the landscape architect's job, to plant the surroundings and make a proper setting. Landscape architectural education has become better in some ways, more integrated between the two fields of architecture and landscape architecture. However, among the older architects

I have worked with, this attitude of wanting me to make a setting for his building was common.

Buktenica: Did you feel, as a woman, the denial of your other talents?

Scott: Yes, sometimes, but I knew that men, my confreres, had the same feeling; that is, that they were treated the same way by architects.

Yes, I found many architects, when I would go to see them for the first time, would explain their plans as though I couldn't read plans. An architect would show me his drawings and explain everything as though I couldn't see it. All of a sudden he would realize that the plan as upsidedown for me and say, "Oh, I am so sorry. I will turn the plan around so you can understand it." I would have to say, "I can read the plans from any direction. I have had maybe as much design training as you have," and finally get him to recognize that plans were not news to me. I went through that routine many times, but I didn't take it personally.

Because I had to have all those agricultural sciences, I only had two years of design at UC. It was not adequate, and I did not think that John Gregg was a very good designer. I knew some of his gardens. He employed me as a designer for him, a draftsman, and I was not impressed.

Buktenica: That was in your third year?

Scott: Third and fourth years. Four years of landscape design was only a beginning. We received a lot of practical information and observed the state-of-the-art in California, but we needed more design theory and problem-solving, which had to be supplemented either through an apprenticeship or going on to graduate study.

I knew that I would have to go on to graduate school to get more design courses. I wanted to go to Harvard, but Harvard was not open to women, so I went to Cornell. My friends were surprised at my choice because they thought Cornell was also a men's college. Cornell is a land-grant college, just like the University of California, established in 1865, three years earlier than the University of California. Cornell was my second choice because at that time the Prix de Rome was a very big prize for landscape architecture, and Cornellians had won it many times, if not more times than Harvard had. I was admitted to Cornell's combined Landscape Architecture and Architecture graduate program in the fall of 1926.

## V CORNELL UNIVERSITY, 1926-1928

Cornell was a wonderful experience. Architecture and landscape architecture were taught in the same building, in the same drafting rooms, the whole top floor of White Hall, with only one or two partial divisions separating classes. There were only about a hundred and twenty students, architects and landscape architects who shared a mutual respect for both disciplines.

Every other problem was a joint problem for architects and landscape architects. This delighted me from the first. I was not enrolled for a degree, so I took all design problems, the architects' problems, the landscape architects' problems, and joint problems. I was working like a fiend, night and day.

Dean Bosworth was the greatest design teacher I could then imagine. He taught theory of design. Professor Young, who later became dean while I was in my second year, was a structural man. I also took all the structural work the architects took. Professor E. Gordon Davis, the landscape department chairman, was a good designer but was not well and didn't come around to give criticism as much as Professors Montillion and Lawson.

There were also two visiting architectural critics, Professor Schuchardt, and Mr. Seymore, a practicing architect who came up from New York two days a week. We had these men, plus the regular faculty, giving criticism of our designs. This was an entirely new approach for me. At Berkeley I had had only two critics, always the same, each giving his particular slant on design. There was no controversy or challenge.

I was put on probation at Cornell because Cal had a four-year undergraduate course while Cornell had a five-year undergraduate program. The graduate school had accepted me as a graduate student because I had always taken twenty-two units when only eighteen were required. At Cornell I had to prove that I could equal their five-year undergraduates, who had had three years of design, whereas I had had only two. Professor Davis was unsure that I, a student of John Gregg's, could make the grade at Cornell.

(Before leaving for Cornell I learned from Professor Gregg that his arch enemy was the head of the department there, one E. Gordon Davis. Gregg was a peculiar man. He and Professor Shepherd never spoke to each other, although they shared an office and I worked for both of them. They would ask me, "What is he going to do?" I would say, "Why don't you ask him? Don't ask me." I learned they both had great peculiarities, and that Gregg had lots of enemies. Why, I don't really know.)

(He admitted that I was going to be under his arch enemy from their college days at Massachusetts Aggie, as it was then known, and he said, "You will probably not be well treated by Professor Davis because you have been my student and he will probably take it out on you," which he did, slightly. When I got to Cornell Davis right away said, "Well, I don't suppose you learned much at Cal from that man, Gregg.")

Being really scared, on my first problem I did very poorly. On the second problem I got a gold seal. This was a practice they had of giving the top three projects gold seals and \$10 to pay for materials. Gold seal problems were photographed and kept for their records. I won three gold seals in a row, so there was no question from then on about my standing.

I didn't have to worry any more, but I still didn't want to enroll for a degree, because I didn't want to fulfill all of their requirements, and I was sure that I would never want to teach. I did not think that a master's degree meant anything in professional practice, and time proved that it didn't. I only stayed at Cornell five quarters--they had the quarter system--and did not finish the sixth quarter.

I should explain that Cornell is composed of four privately- endowed schools and an agricultural college as part of the land grant college, on one extensive campus. It is as though you had all the departments then at Davis plus those at Berkeley all on one campus. At Cornell they have separate facilities; one is state funded, the other is privately funded. The schools are so separate that the professors seldom know each other. It's the most bifurcated system that can ever be. That is probably another reason why I did not go on the agricultural part of the campus at Cornell to take any plant identification courses. I knew that I intended to practice in the West. I liked California and I expected to come back here.

Cornell is a magnificent large campus with a huge lawn quadrangle shaded by handsome elm trees. The buildings are constructed of local stone which resembles slate. When I visited Cornell a few years ago, I was shocked to learn that all of those elms were killed by the Dutch elm disease. They have been replaced with Zelkovas, Pin oaks and other deciduous trees but, of course, the new trees are very small, and so they are out of scale with the enormous quadrangle.

My interest at Cornell was mainly design, and I was getting exactly what I went there for from excellent professors. This is just to say that, although I had this early horticultural background, it was not my main interest, nor what I then thought the main thrust of the profession was or is. And I still think landscape architecture is a design profession primarily.

My great interest in plants is as design materials, and their natural association with earth forms and water. I have never been interested in the propagation or hybridization of plants. I look at all plants as design materials. I study the whole plant, not just the parts of the plant, to understand its character and its relation to climate.

Plants are one of our landscape design materials, just as canvas and paint are the materials of an artist. Bricks and stones and all kinds of inert materials are landscape materials as much as plants, but plants are unique to our profession. They are the most important materials because they are the living parts. The only thing that makes plants different from architecture, in my opinion, is a spatial difference. Plants take time to mature and are an ever-changing element in design.

Plants also react to light entirely differently from inert or inorganic materials. This makes our work closer to art, closer to that of painters. We must forever study light--shade and shadow, how the plants react to light, whether they absorb or reflect light. The effect of shadows on ground surfaces and walls is of great importance in landscape architecture. Properly placed trees not only define spaces but control glare and affect the microclimate.

There was a very nice spirit at Cornell. Ithaca was a small town, remote from any big city, with only one movie, so there was not very much to do, few distractions. There was a wonderful opportunity to know your professors and have long bull sessions together. They would serve beer or there would be hot dogs or marshmallows to toast over a fireplace.

The president's wife, Daisy Farrand, who liked architects and landscape architects and took particular interest in the College of Architecture, used to come up quite often to White Hall and say, "Which class has a problem due this week? Well, I'll have oyster stew for forty of you in an hour." This might be 10 o'clock and at 11 o'clock we would all go over to the president's house and have hot oyster stew on a bitterly cold night. That kind of experience I had certainly never had at Cal.

There were about sixteen girls out of a hundred and twenty students in the college at that time, I think, some in architecture and a few in landscape architecture. A surplus of men, certainly. I had an introduction to the Telluride fraternity where I met fellows outside of the School of Architecture. There were, naturally, a predominance of fellows in the professional schools.

Dates consisted mainly of going to one open house or another, the movies, skating on Beebe Lake, or working on our own or other projects together. We worked until after midnight many nights, when White Hall was officially closed but for us the music played on. Working on upper classmen's renderings was known as "niggering," an unfortunate term.

I also had to earn some money because Cornell was very expensive, for out-of-state tuition and for heating charges on top of room rent. I did baby sitting at twenty-five cents an hour, and I also did some waiting on tables. I lived with a family way out on the heights and took care of their two children.

A funny thing happened when I first arrived. During the first week not a single girl spoke to me. It was queer. The fellows in the college were all as friendly and as nice as could be. On, I think, the Friday after I got there, one of the girls in the college caught up with me on a shady walk and said, "I hope you don't think we are very unfriendly here, but you know this is a rushing week." I said, "But I'm a graduate student. I already belong to a sorority that doesn't happen to have a chapter on this campus."

She said, "Oh, we thought you were a freshman." They weren't allowed to talk to girls during rushing week. The girls received bids and went to the various houses for tea, but the sisters weren't supposed to be friendly with rushees because it would look like they were trying to get them to join their house. The rules were very strict and strange at Cornell. So, I got to know some fellows in the department before I knew any girls.

Never having been east, I thought the people were rather formal. I wasn't used to their reserved manners. They weren't as outgoing as people in the West, and much dressier. The fellows wore overcoats, many of fur. It was the era of the raccoon coat with a flask in each pocket. But as I got to know people, I found them very warm, and the friendships I made there have continued all my life. Two of my very best friends are Cornellians with whom I still correspond.

I did well in art at Cornell, so well that my art professor, Christian Midjo, urged me to change my major to art. I mention this to emphasize my strong design bent, and that my main interest in landscape architecture is not horticulture.

It was while I was at Cornell in the summer that I went on my first trip to Europe, with my aunt. She was sure she was going to die early, so we wanted to make a trip to Europe before she died. We had to go on a tour, which I resented very much because I was perfectly sure I could manage; although I had never been to Europe, I had studied French for four years in high school and I was quite certain I could manage travel without guidance. I wanted to see Italian and French gardens



principally, so I didn't want to go on a tour. However, she was paying part of my way so I had to do it her way.

She came to Ithaca and we went together to Montreal to sail on a British ship to Liverpool, or Grennoch, which is the harbor of Liverpool. On that ship there was a landscape study tour, a group of girl students from Frost-Lothorpe, a school loosely connected to the Harvard School of Landscape Architecture. I could have enrolled in that school, but having been to a girls' high school, I did not want to go to a girls' college to train for a profession dominated by men. The professor in charge of this tour, which was going to do just exactly what I wanted to do, tried to persuade my aunt to let me join their group. But no, we were all committed, so I went on with the Moran tour. However, it was probably better that I travelled the way my aunt wanted to, for it gave me a very good general survey of European cities.

It was a very fast trip of nine weeks, during which we covered England, France, Italy, and part of Austria and Germany, a hasty trip, very strenuous, but it gave me a real background in European travel and convinced me that foreign travel was very simple, that I could do it on my own the next time. I made up my mind I would return as soon as possible. Next time I would do it my way, and my way came sooner than I expected in the crash of 1929.

I returned to Cornell for the second year after that trip and was more convinced than ever that I needed more education, both more training and more travel. However, I couldn't afford to stay on at Cornell without borrowing, or working more, and I became fed up with the college routine.

I understand perfectly why kids leave college. After having been to lectures and through the design problem routine for six years--the way I crammed work I had really been through seven years of college, but I had done it in six--I was fed up and felt I couldn't listen to one more lecture on theory or go through with one more theoretical design problem. So I quit, much to the consternation of my professors, who advised me to stay and get a master's degree and go into teaching. I said, "I'm never going to teach." I was fed up with educational process, so teaching was the last thing I was ever going to do.

But today I would have had to get the degree. Later I asked Professor [H. L.] Vaughan if I should come back to the University of California to get a degree for which I could have qualified probably in six months of residence. He said it was not necessary and that I would be bored to death. He was doubtless right. So I didn't bother.

At that time one could teach in a university because the professions were still quite fluid. The teaching profession and various professions were fluid enough to permit this mobility. Today there is a surplus of

master's degrees and some doctor's degrees also. I was so sure that I did not want to teach!

If I had gotten a master's degree, I could have commanded a higher status and salary when I was invited to join the faculty of the Department of Landscape Architecture at U.C. Berkeley. Degrees do make a difference in the academic world.

It was time to move into the real world and put my education to practical applications. I dropped out of Cornell and returned to California in 1928 where I did freelance work for Gregg, Shepherd, Willa Cloys Carmack and Howard Gilkey.

## VI OFFICE OF A.E. HANSON, BEVERLY HILLS, 1928-1930

One day after I returned to Berkeley from Cornell in 1928, Gregg told me that a man had just phoned from southern California looking for a landscape architect right away in his office. This was A.E. Hanson.

Mr. Hanson offered me \$35 a week which was, I suppose, the going wage. I knew nothing about him or his office, but I was certainly anxious for a full-time job. I figured very carefully, concluding that I couldn't live on \$35 a week. So I called A.E. back and said I couldn't come for less than \$37.50. He must have laughed hilariously, but he agreed. I started work a week later in for A.E. Hanson in Beverly Hills.

Only by sharing expenses with a friend from U.C., who was teaching agriculture in a high school in Los Angeles County, could I afford an apartment in Beverly Hills. A.E. Hanson was making big money, later became a millionaire, and I was well paid after several months.

I soon learned that A.E. Hanson was no designer. He had never had any design training at all, but he was a super businessman and super promoter. He landed most of the big landscape jobs and had his own construction company.

He had a very brilliant designer in his office, Lee Rombotis, who had won the Prix de Rome in architecture. Lee was a natural architect, also one of the best teachers I have ever had. He could draw superbly because he could visualize completely. After a lot of sketching, when he was ready to put a whole project together, he'd light a cigarette, take two or three puffs, lay it down on the edge of the desk (until it burned a notch in it and we would tell him to take it away), and start at the top of the drawing board and draw down--drafting very complicated plans, because it was all complete in his mind.

His drawing was absolutely clean. He'd just pull his T-square down. When he got through, he would put on his hat and go out of the office. The artist [Miguel] Covarrubias is the only other person in my experience with a similar talent. Lee had a nasty disposition, but he also had charm. We became good friends as teacher and pupil.

Lee was appalled at all the education I had had, and yet didn't know how to use a pencil properly. Said Lee, "My God, you don't even know how to keep your pencil sharp!" Which I didn't. Lee taught me drafting, and how to sketch. He made me work very hard. We went back to the office many nights to sketch or he would give me a photograph to sketch and to bring back in the morning. He was a tyrant, but also a marvelous teacher.

Lee didn't care for fame. He wanted money and he has made plenty. At the time I was getting \$37.50 a week, he was getting a thousand dollars a month. He had designed the Los Angeles County Hospital and done all the working drawings for it.

He had not had a formal college education, but was a genius who could draw from the time he was a child. He came from a big family in Los Angeles with a Rumanian mother and a Greek father. His father made fortunes in real estate and lost them. Lee went to work in an office as an apprentice draftsman at age fourteen for a firm of architects in southern California, Pierpont and Walter S. Davis. The Davis brothers were very well trained architects, so Lee learned architecture straight from them.

Along came the Prix de Rome advertisement and they urged him to take the examination, believing that he could win. Without any formal university education, Lee's project came in first. (Competitors had to turn in their drawings without names on them, and Lee had won because his was an infinitely better project than anybody else's.)

It threw the whole Prix de Rome jury into a quandary. "Who is this Lee Rombotis? Where did he graduate from?" He hadn't graduated from any college, but degrees were a requirement for the competition. The jury finally had to admit that he had won the prize!

Lee spent the next two years living and travelling on his stipend from the American Academy in Rome. When he returned, he worked in Davis' office in Los Angeles for a little while until this big project, the Los Angeles County Hospital came along. The Davis office couldn't really undertake this special project and suggested that Lee Rombotis do it. The hospital board said, "No one man can design a whole hospital. That takes a staff." But Lee Rombotis did it in about half the time that they had allotted, drinking and loafing the other half of the time until A.E. Hanson gave him the job of chief designer.

He was the fastest designer/draftsman imaginable. He went straight from Hanson's office to working for Raymond Hood in New York to finish the drawings for the tower of the Empire State Building. For some years he was the chief designer for the Container Corporation of America, which must have paid him a fabulous salary.

So, there I was in an office of a super-promoter who could land the big jobs, most of the biggest jobs in southern California, with Lee Rombotis as his head designer, and two other architecturally-trained draftspeople.

A. E. Hanson knew plants, having grown up in the nursery business, working for Theodore Payne as a salesman, but he needed somebody who knew plants to make planting plans and supervise planting operations and relieve him for more promotions.

Lee Rombotis didn't know plants, but Lee could visualize forms so clearly he would say, "I want this plant," drawing it for me. "I want you to get me two good specimens of that. They belong right here on this job. See? Now, you find them."

"What is it?" I could always tell. His drawings always showed the plant form clearly. So it was Lee who really made me see trees and shrubs as design materials. Miss Jones had taught me certain things about plant form, but it was Lee who really made plant form and structure very clear to me. By that I mean the branching habit of the plant, the density, color texture, size and scale. Lee had an innate sense of scale refined from travel in Italy and most of Europe.

A.E. Hanson's firm gets credit for some very good landscape design. All of the gardens illustrated in the book, California Gardens, by Winifred Starr Dobyns, 1931, credited to A.E. Hanson, were designed by Lee Rombotis. I worked on all of them.

A.E. Hanson started in the tree moving business. He moved more trees in southern California than anybody ever had. About my fourth day in the office he took me out on a job where they had eight huge Phoenix Canariensis palms in eight-foot boxes ready to place with a crane into prepared holes. This was exciting direct experience. He developed the tree moving technique and guaranteed his trees. Every tree was numbered and guaranteed. If it failed, he put in a new one. And A.E. developed a way of wrapping the bark of the tree to prevent too much transpiration or cracking of the bark, a technique known to the Japanese for centuries. He really had tree moving down pat.

He was a self-made man who attracted that sort of client. There was Hoyt, the doughnut king, and Dr. Carter of Carter's Little Liver Pills, and Gillette of razor blade fame. There were many movie people also and, of course, the Harold Lloyd estate, which I worked on all the time I was in his office.

They were just starting the design and development of the upper part of the Harold Lloyd estate when I joined the staff. (There were many estates, many places in Santa Barbara, Montecito, Bel Air, Pasadena, as well as Beverly Hills.) As soon as we got the surveys, we made the plans and within two weeks started grading and layout.

The Harold Lloyd estate was a very fine estate, really, typical of what was being done in southern California at the time. The house was designed by a good architect, Sumner Spaulding. Harold Lloyd sent Spaulding to Europe to study more Italian details. Sumner had been in Italy before.

The estate, all nineteen acres, the house, all the furniture, everything was designed specially, absolutely everything. Lee designed all of the garden and terrace furniture, as well as all of the garden above the golf-course level. Of its kind, it was a very handsome place. It has recently been sold and subdivided.

Right at this particular time [1976] A.E. Hanson is tentatively offering the drawings from his old office to the University of California. Michael Laurie, chairman of the Department of Landscape Architecture at U.C. Berkeley, has made three trips down to see "my old boss," as he always refers to him. I have never seen A.E. Hanson since the day I walked out of his office. I lost respect for him, but I am mature enough now to see that he was a genius of sorts.

Later he went into real estate, which is basically what he was, a real estate man and a successful one. He is a super salesman with tremendous enthusiasm, a bright man who catches on to ideas quickly and is good natured, but not a designer.

It is unfortunate that his name is the one that is credited with these landscape jobs, because he didn't do anything but get the job and handle the business arrangements. The designers were Lee Rombotis and myself. I did all the planting design on the first jobs, and then little by little Lee began to give me parts of the various estates to design.

Sometimes I designed and detailed whole sections of a garden, after Lee had confidence in me.

I also did lots of supervision. I did not drive a car at that time in Los Angeles. So A.E. had to send a chauffeur or take me to jobs. Out of his big crew he could generally find somebody to drive me, but that began to be a problem. We would spar back and forth and he would say, "If you learn to drive, I'll get you a car." I would say, "How can I learn to drive until I have a car?" This went on and on, and finally one day he took me downstairs and said, "See that? That's your buggy." And there was a Ford roadster for me.

He said, "Now, do you think you are smart enough to learn to drive? Here is a driver who will teach you." I took two lessons with the teacher. On the third day, the day after the second lesson, A.E. came in and said, "Somebody has to go to Pasadena right away on such-and-such a job. We've got a problem out there. You go over there. Do you think you can get there?"

I was pretty scared. The traffic in Los Angeles wasn't what it is now, by any means, but getting to Pasadena from Beverly Hills is still rather complex, and I had never driven the canyon alone. I wasn't sure I knew the direction even, but I started out, got there, straightened out the job problem, whatever it was, and when I got back to the office, everybody gave a sigh of relief. They really were worried for fear something would happen to me. I had made it over and back in record time!

Now, A.E. Hanson had a theory, and I guess it's a good one from his point of view, and it's pretty typical of Hollywood, always send a woman to deal with a man and a man to deal with a woman. He dealt with all the women clients and sent me to deal with the men. It is effective, but I am not exactly the type most would pick for that sort of PR. I realized it was funny, but this was A.E. Hanson's way.

He also had very strong feelings about the kind of language to be used. As a salesman, he would take me to lunch with a client as training in handling clients. When he would ask me what I thought of something and I would say it was very nice, that drove him crazy. He just couldn't stand the word "nice." So as he took me back to the office after one such meeting he said, "Don't you ever use the work 'nice' again in my presence!" He just blew up. "Say it's fine, or damned fine, or something like that."

About a week later when he had me out with some clients at lunch--a very well-educated man and his wife--and he asked me how I liked something, I said, "It's damned fine!" A.E. was flabbergasted! I had done just what he told me to do. A.E. was the kind of person you could get on with if you were direct. He realized he had been too emphatic.

There were some pretty nasty clients. I remember a man who was named Dr. Ivy. We called him "Poison Ivy" in the office because he had a nasty disposition. He had developed some kind of business college and had a big estate that was under construction in Sierra Madre. A great deal of that area has a hard pan under it, which makes tree planting difficult.

A.E. sent me over to Ivy's job. Ivy had called in complaining that no work was going on; the crew was sitting there and nothing was being done, and he would be so-and-so if he was going to pay for having ten Mexicans sit around doing nothing. (Many of the crews were Mexican people.) When I got there, I found Mr. Ivy with his sleeves rolled up, collar opened, and the five scholarship keys dangling from his watch chain. It was a hot day, and he and the Mexican foreman were just about ready to knock each other down.

Here was this confrontation between a so-called educated white man and an uneducated Mexican. The Mexican was trying to tell him that they couldn't dig through the hard pan with the equipment they had and they

were waiting for some dynamite to come with which to blast the holes, a common practice. But Dr. Ivy was so mad, had let himself get into such a temper over this situation, that he wasn't listening and was saying things like, "So, I am to pay you people, ten people, for doing nothing for four hours on my job!"

I arrived on the job. This was when I had a chauffeur, one of the fellows out of the office, but it was my job to handle this situation. My driver was afraid because these Mexicans were furious and ready to fight. But I walked up to them and told Dr. Ivy that he would not have to pay for time the men were waiting.

Well, he calmed down a little bit and we finally got him back in the house. The crew was greatly relieved because they were afraid that their foreman was going to knock the client down and they would all be out of a job. This was a very critical situation, you see. Well, these are the kinds of situations that one can get into in a firm that has its own construction crew as well as its own design team.

I didn't know A.E.'s bookkeeping practices, but it was my job to convince the client that he wouldn't be charged for hours of non-work. You don't solve a problem like this by taking off your coat and rolling up your sleeves to knock the foreman down. A.E. sent me out on some really touchy kinds of personal problems.

Mel [Scott] was also working on the Harold Lloyd estate. That is where I met him. In fact, we met at the head of the cascade on the estate, for which I had just completed the planting plan.

Mel was working with the gardening crew. He almost went blind during his senior year in college as his eyes failed. (His mother had had to read to him in preparation for the English comprehensive exam.) Mel's eye doctor suggested outside work such as landscaping. Before I was a student at U.C., Mel had come up to Berkeley to study landscape design. He only stayed with it for a year because most of the courses were not outside, and he was suffering more eye-strain from drafting and design. He did learn a lot of plant materials from Miss Jones.

He returned to Los Angeles and got a job working with the planting crew of A.E. Hanson. Most of the crew were Mexican, few had even a high school education. They were impressed and astonished that Mel could read the plans in the absence of a nurseryman or planting foreman. A.E. Hanson had about a forty-man construction crew at this time, with only four or five people in the design office, tearing out plans and getting jobs into construction immediately. It was a great and exciting experience. These were the boom years before the crash, you see, that is in early spring of 1928 until the crash of October, 1929. I had not quite two years in that fantastic office.



After several months I got a raise to \$40 or \$45. Lee asked me one day how much I was being paid and ha-ha-ha-ed because my salary was so funny to him. He said, "Well, strike A.E. for a raise." At the end of a project, or when I got the drawings done that A.E. wanted, A.E. would hand me an envelope containing a \$100 dollar bill. I got my paycheck out of the office, but A.E. Hanson handed me these hundred dollar bills in an envelope. I was completely innocent as to why he did this. It was a bonus, of course.

I had also been shocked when an irrigation company salesman offered to cut me in on every job I could steer in his direction, a common Hollywood practice, evidently.

Well, after several of these bonuses I asked Lee about it. He said, "Why, sure. Money passed out in cash you don't report on your income tax." I began to realize that A.E. Hanson wasn't what you would call ethical. I was dismayed, and the longer I stayed, the more evidence there was of many completely unethical practices.

I had had a good many of these bonuses as well as having my salary raised, and I saved all that I could for future travel in Europe. When the crash came, A.E. had forty jobs going, but he fired his labor force overnight, which was against the law, of course. The law requires an employer to give two weeks notice, but A.E. went through bankruptcy so fast that it surprised everyone. He put all of his money into somebody else's name and went through bankruptcy. That was A.E.'s game.

Several months before the crash, he made a pact with each of us. He had a good design team with everything going smoothly just when everything was booming in southern California, and he was very successful in landing huge estates. But he had begun to get scared about losing his design team and being unable to produce.

So he came to each of us separately and said, "Now, if you want to quit, you give me two months notice, and if I want to fire you for any reason, I'll give you two months notice." Two months instead of two weeks! So when the crash came, I held him to the two months. Lee Rombotis was fed up anyway, so he took his two months' pay and went off to New York and finished the working drawings on the Empire State Building. I stayed and made scrapbooks for A.E. Hanson, in order to fill my time.

One by one they quit. We were down to two people in the drafting room at the last and finally, I remember, I quit, on the thirteenth of February. A happy day for me. The crash was in October and I was there until February. I sailed for Europe on March 8, 1930.



VII                    EUROPE, 1930-31

Scott:                It was clear the Depression was going to be bad, would go on for a long time, and there would be no jobs. The crash stopped everything of a luxury nature. I had been saving my money for a trip to Europe, so when the crash came, I took stock of what I had saved and what little income I would have over a period of time, and decided I would go to Europe.

Madge Hoyt, one of former friends from Cornell was thinking exactly the same way. She was then working for an architect in New York City on the Chrysler Building. She replied to my telegram that she would like very much to join me. Her job would end in about two weeks when the detailing she was doing would be completed. There wasn't a chance of getting another job.

Madge and I had enjoyed Professor Phelps' course in history of art and architecture at Cornell, and I had had that very brief survey trip with my aunt in 1928. The fine course in art history at Girls' High School had made me yearn to know the great architecture, landscape architecture, and art of Europe. Growing up in a very small town in the Northwest, then living in Oakland and San Francisco, I was a westerner who felt the rawness and newness of the West and its lack a cultural heritage. I knew the museums in San Francisco, and its few great buildings had given me a taste of great art and architecture. I knew I had to go to Europe to see more.

So we planned, packed, and sailed for Europe on March 8th, just three weeks after I left the office of A.E. Hanson. I stayed in Europe for twenty-two months. My banker friend, Mr. Strong, said I didn't have enough money to send a dog, but perhaps I could travel for a year by skipping some meals.

Buktenica:          What did you do in Europe for two years?

Scott: So much that I hardly know where to begin. Madge and I sailed on an Italian Line ship, the Saturnia, to Naples, second class. Adventure numero uno. Returning to Italy was the realization of a dream. I enjoyed everything about it, the sounds, sights, smells--that is, the sound of the language, the handsome people, the good simple food. It was the golden age of tourism--the right time to be there before the automobile took over and became the menace it is in cities today. Rome was a thrilling place to be.

My friend Bob Stryker, his pal Ben Johnson, and several other fellows who had gone to Harvard, were at the American Academy in Rome on landscape architecture fellowships. Later I traveled with them. We all photographed and measured practically every historic garden near Rome. I studied Italian at the same time, and lived very, very cheaply. Madge and I travelled together for three months until she had to return home from Paris about the end of July.

One of our problems was in getting permission to see the great old villas. The depression in Europe had closed these estates. There were only caretakers in residence who would not admit us without written permission. We had a letter from the American Academy, but also it was necessary to write in Italian or French.

I couldn't master Italian grammar, although I had picked up some Italian, but I had had French in high school, so I decided to go to Paris to study more French. I wanted to see French gardens and estates also.

I went to the Sorbonne and studied French eight hours a day to learn to write decent letters to obtain permission to see the places I wanted to visit. I also took courses in French culture, and one in city planning, which was chiefly about the problems of extending the Paris subway system.

### Italy

Scott: Rome at that time was small enough to walk all the way across. It's a city on hills, like San Francisco. There were only two streetcar lines, called circularis--one went counter-clockwise and the other went clockwise. You could take one and get off any place to walk up a hill to get a view of the great city. You could experience the city. It was small enough to comprehend. Every square, formed by great late Renaissance or

baroque buildings, was an experience. The fountains, which play all the time, are magnificent.

I had an opportunity to decide what I liked and what I didn't like. I did not like most of the baroque architecture in Italy. I did not like the Renaissance buildings very much either, great art or architecture that they were supposed to be. But I did like the spaces those buildings enclosed. What I reacted to were the really early works, the architecture from the end of the medieval period, the Romanesque, and the beginning of the Renaissance.

Buktenica: Have you any idea why that is what you reacted to?

Scott: Yes, I like art and architecture before they reach that degree of perfection or rigidity known as style. I like innovation, the upsurge of creativity that shows in all early work, before it is over-refined. I have found this to be true all my life.

I found this out by myself in Europe; not from studying pictures of art or architecture, only by experiencing the spaces and the buildings was I able to learn my aesthetic preferences.

It has always annoyed me very much to find Renaissance chapels inside of Gothic cathedrals. This absolute disregard of one artist for a former artist's or architect's work (which really was expressed most often during the Renaissance)--the tremendous arrogance of many Renaissance artists and architects annoyed me and has continued to do so on all subsequent trips.

Both Florence and Venice have magnificent early churches. However, many of them are cluttered with Renaissance tombs and chapels of different materials and scales which seem entirely irrelevant. These tombs and chapels by themselves are often great, but they are in the wrong context. A pure early Renaissance chapel such as the Pazzi Chapel in Florence is great architecture, but those chapels thrust into the earlier buildings I find very unpleasant.

Each work of art was commissioned by a patron, so the artist did what the patron demanded or his own ego prompted. Artists can't be very different from their own time. It's not an indictment of particular artists, but I think egocentricity was particularly prevalent during the Renaissance. The Renaissance, great as it was, left an awful lot of bad art and architecture all over Western Europe.

I always have been fascinated by the depiction of landscape by the earliest painters--by Giotto, by Piero della Francesca, or Duccio of the early Sienese school. They

abstracted the forms of the landscape in a way that some critics have called grotesque. But if you really observe the work of those painters, and have visited many of the precise places that they were depicting, you know that their paintings show very keen observation on their part. They were recording what they saw and had grown up with. They were depicting the kinds of geological formations that were there, abstracted and simplified. There is a great deal to be learned about landscape from these early paintings.

I learned that I liked pure colors, the pure colors of Giotto, Duccio, and Fra Angelico and most of the early Italian painters. I also learned to have enormous respect for the painting, the great human forms--of Masaccio. They are monumental, like great monoliths. That a painter could make a human figure have the nobility of a god, but still be a human being in a painting, is a great and moving experience to witness.

I was tremendously impressed and excited by the hill towns in central Italy. Their adaptation to their sites make them into works of art. They were built on hilltops for military reasons, for protection, near castles. But when you observe them from a distance or experience them from within, they are superb adaptations to very difficult sites.

These were built long before the bulldozer. Early builders didn't do a cut-and-fill job as we do it today. They built enormous retaining walls, twenty-eight to thirty-five feet high, filling rubble behind them. They built out from the base of the hill on a good foundation, sometimes using the rubble from good, earlier buildings for fill. This process of building great walls and filling behind them results in an accentuation of the verticality of the site, as well as extending the area of the plateau or terrace.

Buktenica: The walls are primarily of indigenous materials, aren't they?

Scott: Fortunately, Italy has some excellent stone, perhaps not as good as France, but high quality stone. The Italians have made superb brick for thousands of years and still do. The use of local materials, just stone or brick and tile for roofing, produces a marvelous unity. Such unity from building materials is rare in our country. It's a very rewarding kind of experience to see these beautifully unified towns.

It also was impressive to visit the great villas and to see how few varieties of plants were used. Italian villas were designed mostly by architects, so they were truly landscape architecture; that is, geometrical designs imposed on the land, on well-chosen sites that could take the imposition. The villa

designers showed a very considerable understanding of site planning and restraint.

At Villa Lante, for instance, which steps down a slope of varying degrees, the slope is utilized in the most ingenious series of ways. The progression of the woodland spring at the top of the hill, becoming ever more architectural, more designed, until it reaches the final water parterre at the bottom, is like the development of a Beethoven symphony. There is tremendous variety and change, but always the development of the theme until it is resolved in an enormous water parterre. Such designs I have never forgotten. I often recall their details and relive my visits to them.

I went alone to many villas. I think there is great value in traveling alone, although you often have the haunting feeling of wishing somebody could share the experience with you. I find that I see and record better when I am alone than when I am with another person.

A funny thing happened to me on my way to see Villa Lante, which also made that occasion memorable. At that time I was a very small person, very thin, weighing only ninety-five pounds. I went on what would be called a fourth class train, from Rome to Viterbo, which is perhaps a two-hour ride on a little train going northwest. The train didn't start for a long time, and as I was tired I fell asleep.

When I came to, all the people in the coach were crowded around me, talking at once and leaning very close to me. I knew some Italian, but they seemed to be speaking a dialect so it took me awhile to understand what was going on. When I finally got it, they were betting on where I came from, what my nationality was.

I had been asleep, my eyes were closed, so they couldn't see my hazel eyes. My hair was very dark brown then and some were betting that I had come from Sicily or from another Italian province. Most thought I was Italian. I had been in Italy long enough to be wearing some Italian clothes, shoes and stockings anyway, and these were peasant people--some were wearing the local costumes of embroidered aprons and caps. Their experience was not very broad, obviously. One man thought I might be from Paris, but most of them thought I was from Venice or Milan or someplace that they had heard of.

Finally, one young man got up his nerve and asked me where I came from. When I said I came from California, they all sat down and just laughed because nobody had won. They had to

return the bets, which may have been one or two lira. These were very poor people.

Then they asked me all manner of questions--where I was going and why? I was going to Bagnaia to see Villa Lante. Sure, they knew the villa, and some of them were from Bagnaia, some from another village. Where was I going to stay? There was only one hotel in Viterbo and it was expensive, they said.

You understand, I wasn't dressed that well, not like a tourist. It was depression time. I was living cheaply. They told me there was only one real hotel, but Senor whoever-he-was would take care of me! Well, I was a little disconcerted by this, but obviously their intentions were right, so those that got off at the village before said, "When you go to Villa Lante, you will have to go by carrozza, and you will have to come through our village. You must go to such-and-such a little inn, and we will see you tomorrow."

When we got off the train at Viterbo, this young man escorted me through the town and into a private home where he told the woman to give me a room and take care of me. It was not labelled an inn or pension, but that's what it was.

The woman was a motherly soul, very buxom, and I was thin and little, so she wanted to feed me right away. She took me to a room which was up under the roof in an attic. A large bed filled the room. That was about all. She said that when I came downstairs she would fix me some food. I wasn't really hungry at that time of day, but she obviously wanted me to eat. When I came down, she had a big meal ready for me.

The young man who had taken me there had gone to his home or business office, changed his clothes and came back wearing striped trousers, a cutaway coat, and a raincoat worn like a cape. This is what Italian men were wearing then for weddings, festivals, and such occasions. I later learned that he was a commission merchant who commuted between Rome and Viterbo to arrange to sell the produce of the area.

He gallantly escorted me around the ancient Etruscan town of Viterbo, which has a handsome square. The church wasn't open, so he got the priest next door to come and open it. Right away the priest wanted to bless me, and when he found out I wasn't a Catholic, they were both dismayed. My Romeo told everybody we passed why I had come to Viterbo.

The next day he returned early the next morning saying he had to go back to Rome, but would arrange for a carrozza driver to take me to Villa Lante. I could have done my own talking,



but he did it for me, arranging the trip much more cheaply than I could have. He told the driver to stop at a certain little inn in the village and have lunch there, which we did. The people were friendly and charming.

Buktenica: What sort of a meal did you have in the inn?

Scott: The food was always pasta and salad and some meat, probably cold meats, which they always have on hand. I found in many little trattorias that they would put out a great chunk of parmesan cheese. They would weigh both the spaghetti and the cheese and ask how much you wanted--a kilo, half a kilo? I always wanted much less, about a tenth of a kilo. They would argue and insist that I take a quarter of a kilo, at least, but I never could eat it all. They'd weigh the cheese before you ate, and again afterward, and you paid just for what you ate. Sometimes there was tomato sauce for the pasta, sometimes not.

This was early spring, when the countryside was carpeted with wild cyclamen and violets. To arrive at this little village, and the great wall enclosing the villa, and to get a glimpse through the iron grilled gate, was the realization of a dream. The gate was locked, but I had written and obtained permission which I presented to the gate-keeper. So I was permitted to wander about in my favorite garden for hours.

I had already seen most of the great villas when measuring and sketching with my landscape friends, but this villa I saw entirely alone, and it made the deepest impression. By all odds it is the greatest villa in Italy. There are fine pictures and plans of all the great villas in the books of Shephard & Jellico.

Another villa I went to see by myself was out of Padua. Madge was travelling with me but didn't want to see so many gardens. She was an architect and wanted to concentrate on architecture, while I wanted to visit famous villas. The Villa Donna Della Rosa is on flatter ground, a slight slope, making it a very different garden, built two hundred years after the Villa Lante, but one of the best of the eighteenth century villas. It's near the village of Asolo, which is where Browning lived when he was in Italy, and where he wrote "Pippa Passes," and many of his famous poems. He loved Italy and lived in Asolo a long time.

At the time I went to Asolo, in 1930, it was a dying village. It had been one of the silkworm-raising villages. Mulberry trees, on which the worms feed, are grown in that area. It has a very mild climate on the lower slopes of the Dolomites. The peasants picked the mulberry leaves, tended the

silkworms, and unwound the cocoons to prepare the silk for the factories that weave it into cloth. Some large silk factories are still in that area.

For some reason, the village of Asolo had lost its business. This was depression time and there was probably little market for fine silk. But an English woman had come to Asolo a few years before and was trying to revive the industry by assigning peasants to work with the second and third grade cocoons, those that had been discarded. These were the cocoons that had been partially eaten through, so the silk was all in short lengths that had to be hand tied or knotted. She could only pay them a pittance, but it was better than nothing.

They had begun again to weave this knotted raw silk there in Asolo. She taught them to weave very simple things. She was doing the dyeing, giving them the silk and letting them weave as they chose. This process produced some very beautiful fabrics full of knots which gave them an interesting rough texture. I bought a number of pieces of silk thinking that I might be able to market them in this country, but I never was.

Fabrics, either textured or woven, have always fascinated me. Learning about silk weaving was another kind of enriching experience. I still have some of that silk.

Getting to Asolo was also a great experience. From Padua I took a train to a junction. Then I had to walk several miles to get to the village of Asolo. I stayed in the village two or three nights. When I was ready to return, there was no transportation available. There was no return train that stopped at the junction where I had gotten off. I went to the junction where there was a brakeman who lived in a tiny house by the tracks, to wait for the train.

He came up to me and asked me where I was going, and I told him I was going to Padua. He said no train stopped there going to Padua. They only stopped coming from Padua. I asked if he couldn't flag the train. He said he would try, but he didn't think he would be successful. He said he thought there was a train coming through in the morning--this was late afternoon.

But where could I stay? Well, I would have to walk back to Asolo or stay with his family. He said, "You'd better stay with my family."

It was the poorest little hovel I have ever seen. The people were overwhelmingly kind. Their night supper consisted of watery cabbage soup with olive oil plus some dry crusts of

bread. There were three generations, about nine people, living in what would amount to three small rooms. He made all the children get out to give me a room alone. I was so touched I could hardly stand it. The situation was pathetic.

I knew I couldn't just hand them money, although they needed it desperately. I didn't have many lira with me, but what few I had I put inside the pillow case in the morning before I went down to the train. He flagged the train and I was just ready to get on when the children came running down the hill holding the envelope of money. He absolutely would not take it. He insisted that I keep it.

These people were proud and kind and pleased that I had come to see the only great thing in their region. I never knew the family's name. I wrote a letter addressed to the station master, which was all I could do. I don't know if he or his children could even read. All of these experiences told me much about the economic conditions in Italy, and how vastly different they were from conditions in my own country.

### France

Scott:

I was alone after Madge left me in Paris, but I lived in a pension on the Blvd. Montparnasse and made some friends, mostly English or Irish. I kept away from Americans because I wanted to master French. French is very difficult for me. I have very little language aptitude, but I learned enough to do what I wanted to do.

At the Sorbonne they had much better methods of teaching French to foreigners than any French I had ever had in high school. They gave us exercises for pronunciation and talked about voice placement, which I had never heard of before. One term at the Sorbonne lowered the pitch of my voice and taught me how to project my voice.

There were other courses for foreigners at the Sorbonne at that time, one in French culture and one in city planning, which I took. I enrolled at the Sorbonne for two semesters and at the same time I left the pension to board with a Frenchwoman to absorb as much French as possible. Madame Biffaud proved to be a character right out of Balzac.

Some other friends came over during the summer, three girls from Cal, an architect and two art majors. There were no car rental agencies at that time (1930), but we persuaded a

garage to rent us a French Ford for a ten-day trip through Normandy and Brittany, returning through the wine country, the Loire valley. We four American girls caused quite a stir as we explored, sketched and picnicked. We visited every Norman castle, cathedral and chateau. We stayed overnight in the most picturesque little towns, causing a sensation in every one.

France was an entirely different country, and by comparison with Italy, it was a wealthy country with great natural resources. It has very good soil, the farms looked prosperous from wherever you enter, even out in Brittany, which is probably the poorest section we visited on that trip. In general, there is a sense of affluence and well-being in France. Some of the French chateau gardens are in remote places. There is, however, a vast difference between village life in France and village life in Italy.

The great gardens of France are of much later date than the Italian villas. They are royal palaces, or the great chateaux of the nobles. They reflect wealth from way, way back, the medieval and romanesque periods. French palaces and chateaux are great architectural monuments. Contrary to the Italian adaptation to the site, the French designers re-made the sites. The nobles usually had to build on rather flat ground. They did enormous re-grading jobs, using many horses, even commandeering the manpower of the army to modify a site.

Buktenica: What was their motivation? Use, or just whimsy in esthetics?

Scott: Ostentation, generally.

There are some hill towns in France, but that isn't where the fine gardens are found. They are generally in the rich valley regions along the great rivers, which present different site problems. They had to dig moats and let the water from the river encircle the place, plus building a series of great walls for protection. This is an entirely different kind of response to the need for protection from the hilltop site.

The French people are less friendly, more intellectual. There is a vast difference between the kinds of people in the two capital cities, Paris and Rome.

In 1930 I knew nothing about the Bauhaus. Most universities at that time were teaching architecture in the old Beaux Arts manner. I had never heard of Le Corbusier or any of the great contemporary designers, so it was a real stroke of good luck that in the pension where I stayed on the Left Bank, there was an Austrian architect, Monsieur Landau. He had come to Paris to work for Corbu. He took me to that office and to

see the new Cite Universitaire. I was wide-eyed, having heard nothing about the new movement in architecture.

He was aghast that I should be a product of six years of American university study and have never heard of any of these designers. This showed me how advanced European art movements were at that time. The Sorbonne, however, was still teaching Beaux Art method in their ateliers. M. Landau had utter contempt for that. But he was shocked because he thought of America as being advanced. Although he had never been in our country, he knew the work of Frank Lloyd Wright from pictures, whereas I only knew his name.

Wright's work had appeared in architectural journals and books. M. Landau introduced me to the new design movement that was going on in Paris.

Buktenica: Chicago was the only area where architecture was changing in the United States, wasn't it?

Scott: No, not really. Frank Lloyd Wright was a mid-westerner. But Europeans knew others of our advanced designers.

Buktenica: And you didn't?

Scott: I didn't because American universities didn't teach us about innovators.

Buktenica: Even on the West Coast? That is surprising.

Scott: They didn't teach anything about the new trends in art or architecture. I was fortunate in meeting M. Landau because I could easily have gone through my whole European experience without having heard of the new trends there either.

There were street art exhibitions by the artists who were rejected from the academy shows, and I did see those, so I knew a little bit more about what was going on in painting, post-impressionism, and dadaism. In the street shows there were more experimental paintings by Dufy, Mondrian, and Picasso, whose paintings were accepted most of the time. But there were a lot of other artists doing far-out paintings whose works were not accepted in the salons, whose names I don't recall.

I was unaware of the great American colony of writers--American and English expatriates--that were in Paris. I had never heard of Hemingway, never heard of any of the people who were sitting right there in the same cafes which I frequented. Their names would have meant absolutely nothing to

me. That's how unsophisticated I was. In landscape design there was no new movement. I was studying the great historical gardens and parks.

### Italy. Continued

Buktenica: Do you have notes on all those trips?

Scott: I have notes from those twenty-two months of travel, photographs, drawings, and many mementos. I wasn't a good photographer, but I took hundreds of detail shots which I still have. They are not valuable because there are much better pictures in many books. I was showing my pictures and drawings of a villa that I measured in 1930 and visited again last spring to a friend who asked, "Why did you measure villas?" I said, "This was the way we studied them."

It was a good way of getting an appreciation of the scale of a villa. You learn how big each area is as well as the relationship of parts to each other. This was a kind of archaeology. It was the Beaux Art method, which is looked down upon now. The method had a great deal of merit, however. Most of the Italian villas were designed by architects or great artists. They were old enough for the trees to be in proportion to the architecture in 1930 and 1931. Today, the cypress trees are so tall they frequently dwarf the architecture. I have seen some of these same villas over a period of nearly forty-five years, so I can appreciate how much has happened in the tree growth, and how this extra height diminishes the vertical scale of the buildings.

We would tour in groups from the American Academy, two or three fellows and three or four girls together, with a couple of steel tapes and notebooks to do the measuring. We were very earnest about all this sketching, measuring, and picnicking on wine, bread, cheese and salami. We all had a wonderful time, living for about eighty cents a day in the cheapest pensions.

I spent the whole fall of 1930 in Paris, studying at the Sorbonne. Christmas in Rome was a two-week celebration. Honor, Mary, and Mrs. Easton, their mother, came over and rented a floor of a villa in Rome and invited me to join them. Two Harvard fellows from the American Academy, Bob Stryker, and Ben Johnson, joined in the festivities. We splurged and had a wonderful time for two weeks as guests of Mrs. Easton. We celebrated Christmas American style and Italian style. We made

swags of fruit and flowers like those in della Robbia sculpture or paintings in Italy. Our Italian friends loved it. We decorated the whole place with handsome swags of fruit, flowers and boughs.

After Mrs. Easton left, Honor and I found a place to live with an Italian husband and wife, who had no children. The man was an attorney for Mussolini--this was during Mussolini's time, of course. It was a very ugly apartment building rather near St. Peter's on the other side of the Tiber. From our room we looked into Bramante's Loggia in the Castel S. Angelo. We went sketching every day that winter that wasn't too cold. It was beastly cold that winter, but we continued to go seeing villas, palaces, museums and churches, absorbing Italian culture.

Through the Giglis with whom we lived, Honor and I got jobs of sorts such as working in a mosaic factory for as long as we could stand it. The conditions were unbelievably bad. The workers were all women who had to sit on stools before a long table. You couldn't get off the stool unless the floor lady gave you permission to do so. We worked on a cartoon upside down with colors that were designated. The tesserae had to be damp, so we were working with our hands in cold water in a big, drafty loft building. It was the coldest work I ever did, though interesting to learn how mosaics were prepared.

Buktenica: You sorted the colors?

Scott: The sorted colors were given to us, a real factory method. The colors were designated on the back of the cartoon.

After that, we tried our luck at getting into the Italian Art Academy. We had met various art students, so Honor and I both enrolled in the Accademia della Belle Arte in Rome, where we went for one term. The instruction was not really as good as I had had at Cornell, but we learned about Italian life and culture, and we got to know some young people our own age. Sometimes they would take us to their homes for a meal or a weekend picnic. They drew cartoons of us exaggerating our flat-heeled walking shoes which no Italian girl would think of wearing.

The strongest lesson I learned out of that was that no matter how well acquainted we became with these Italian friends, they always thought we were rich Americans. When I would explain that I earned about ninety percent of the money for my trip, they couldn't believe it, thought it absolutely impossible. In Italy, the reverse would have been impossible. So I really learned what a boon it is to be born an American,

and the great difference in the economic conditions of European countries, particularly Italy versus the U.S.A.

A number of those students were very brilliant. There were two that we later tried to help get into American universities. We tried to get a fellowship for one, but did not succeed. They were talented people who could never have had the opportunities that we had. This taught me much more than the course in economics at Cornell. Our friendships would only go so far because the students just didn't believe that we weren't really rich.

Buktenica: There was a strong class separation in Italy, wasn't there?

Scott: Yes, but even though these were talented people, they couldn't have gone to art school if they hadn't been the sons and daughters of fairly rich people. They couldn't possibly have had the reverse opportunity of going to another country to study. At that time, Italians had to post a bond when they left the country. Italy couldn't afford to have very much money drained out of its economy.

As I said, the instruction was not great. We had life class and drawing from casts, but the critiques weren't very good. Italian art students couldn't see why we came over to study their architecture. They had so much of it! They longed to see our country, to see the things that were new. Their old buildings they did not respect, because they were old and inconvenient. They did respect their painters and sculptors, however. They weren't in the least awed by their palaces or gardens and couldn't see why in heck we were making a point of studying them.

Today there is a new appreciation. They are reconstructing some villas. The government has realized that villas are great tourist attractions, so now money is being poured into a few, such as Villa d'Este.

### Spain

Scott: In February 1931 I made a trip to Spain from Italy. I felt much more at home in Spain because southern California architecture showed some Spanish influence. The houses in Spain of white-washed stucco or stone looked a great deal like some houses that I had worked on with A.E. Hanson. In fact, there was an architect in southern California, Roland Coate, who was very famous for his Spanish-style houses. Books



published in the 30s are full of his works. When I visited Ronda, for instance, every house looked like it had been designed by Roland Coate. It was quite easy to see that Mr. Coate had been to Ronda, as had many of the architects that were working in southern California.

The architectural scale in Spain is smaller than in France or Italy. Domestic buildings looked domestic; that is, they are related to our idea of domestic scale, so that I felt quite at home with most of the houses and gardens that I saw in Spain. Many of these gardens were very old, but they had been re-designed by the French landscape architect, Forrestier. They had been Frenchified so they were not the original kinds of gardens that the Moors had built in Spain.

Buktenica: What was the basic difference then, surface treatment?

Scott: No, the change in scale--the change in detail.

The Moorish gardens had more enclosed spaces, more intimate spaces. I think that Forrestier opened up some of these by taking down some walls and removing some old overgrown hedges. Doubtless he found that the plants were old, or the hedges had died and had to be replanted. In any case, the gardens were quite different from the idea of these gardens I had formed from studying books on Spanish gardens published in the 1920s. Spanish gardens had all been well photographed, as had all the Italian gardens.

Seville was getting ready for an exposition, and Forrestier was employed to dress up the gardens for the exposition. The exposition never came off because the king was forced to abdicate. I was in Granada, Spain, when that event stopped everything. Spain was bankrupt.

One of the things that tended to bankrupt the country was the Barcelona Exposition, which was over before I got to Spain. It was one of the great world expositions. Spanish lighting engineers produced the greatest example of early lighting and water play coordination that has ever been done. I was fortunate enough to see this lighting once. It cost an enormous amount of money to run the fountains and play the lights with any changes of pattern and intensity.

Buktenica: This was the exposition that Mies van der Rohe did the pavilion for, the Barcelona Exposition?

Scott: Yes, you are right. I was in Barcelona again in 1974 but the old exposition buildings are really not very good. Some of the buildings are being used today, very dated in design. The big

terraces where those fountains were and where the lighting played on them formed a grand design. It was a great exposition which has been well documented. I have not made a study of it. My impressions are still vivid.

I also saw the work of Gaudí, the great Spanish architect in Barcelona, his great unfinished cathedral. I have seen it since and liked it, but in 1931 I thought it was hideous. I went to see a number of other works of Gaudí's, some of his roof gardens and the park that he designed. Even though I like primitive art and things that are less refined, Gaudí's work was too crude for me at that time. Now, I think his work is very great indeed. Gaudí's work is not primitive in any sense, it is rather an extension of Gothic.

### Tunis

Scott: I also made an unplanned trip to Tunis. I was in Sicily when a terrible storm occurred. There were very few tourists anywhere in Europe at that time because it was in the depths of the Depression. Those travelling were mostly students and teachers. This was a storm in which many hundreds of people lost their lives. Mud flowed down off Mt. Pelegrino and buried people alive in their homes. The police came around to the pension and said that all foreigners must leave. The water supply was gone, and we had to get out. There were two British transports in the bay, so you could take your choice. We could go back to Naples, or to Tunis, where the ships were going. Olive and I chose Tunis.

At this same pension, by another piece of real luck, there was a woman who was an art teacher from the International School of Art in Zakopani, Poland. She urged us to go to Tunis. She gave us a letter to one artist, Grahim al Grehari, who was considered to be the finest embroiderer and the finest athlete in Tunis. He spoke English and many other languages because he had been to many international athletic events. Olive and I boarded the transport for Tunis along with a mob of Arabs speaking many strange languages. We had to be vaccinated along with all the deck passengers by one doctor using one needle sterilized over an alcohol burner. Olive was terrified.

Tunis was my first experience with raw color, pure color in sunlight and in shade, which absolutely knocked me over. I was drunk with color from the minute I got there until I left. The buildings were painted pure cobalt blue, pure pink, pure

green or pure yellow. The Tunisians dye their wools with these same intense colors.

At that time, when you went in the souks, or covered markets composed of tents and little shops, the very narrow street was covered with what we would call muslin, which removed all glare. Each shop Grahim took us through was a marvelous color composition. He had a shop where he employed many people doing marvelous metallic embroidery on brightly dyed leather, one of the great products of Tunis. He introduced us to many of the shop keepers who would serve us very sweet, thick coffee.

I will never forget that experience. It educated my eyes in a way that no other experience has equaled. It was over-powering to be immersed in that much color. The light that filtered through the cotton cloth was marvelous. I really understood, for the first time, the difference between color when light is controlled and color out in bright sunlight.

The Arabs work and sell there in those tiny shops. There were handsome rugs. Every kind of craft work came in by caravan from all across Africa to be sold in the great market in Tunis. Marvelous things were made in Tunis and all over Africa. But for me, the Tunisian experience was this really great education in color.

Buktenica: How do you explain the difference in their approach to color?

Scott: It is only in looking backward that I can see that this was my first great color experience. I have had many courses in color since and made a real study of color theory. I can now see that it was then that I learned the difference between color as washed out by the sunshine in daylight and color under controlled lighting conditions; also, the difference between back lighting and direct light, which I knew vaguely from studying painting. I knew it in an intellectual way, but to experience the difference this way made one of the deepest impressions of my life.

Mel and I went again to Tunis in 1958. The souks were not the same. They were full of manufactured goods, not exciting. The closest thing to Tunisian souks now is the market in Istanbul. But even that was not comparable to the market in Tunis in 1931. Marrakesh in Morocco comes close. We visited Morocco in 1972. The rugs we have upstairs have the wonderful, full intensity of colors used by people who live out in the desert where the light washes all the color out of everything. Out in brilliant sunlight, they can take all this pure purple, pure blue, pure anything. Those rugs, however, were designed

to be used in tents, or palaces or mosques with very little light.

Years later, I became very enamored of Klee's painting. I have collected prints of Paul Klee's work and made a very special trip to see his work in Bern, Switzerland. I used his books in my teaching. I learned much from studying Klee's work. Before I read his biography and knew that he had been in Tunis after his war experience, I kept wondering where he got his command of pure color. I'd say of his paintings, "These things look just like Sicily or Tunis." I later learned that he, too, had long before me been overwhelmed by pure color from his visit to those countries.

We talk about the difference in an artist's color palette, for instance, from early to late Van Gogh. I have seen many exhibits of his work showing his early work in northern France with dull, muddy colors. When he moved to southern France, he was impressed by the difference in light and began to use lighter, clearer colors. From northern France to southern France is quite a jump, but if you go all the way down to Tunis, the difference in light intensity is very much greater.

California is a very long state, so we really have about the same range of light from north to south. From Seattle to Oaxaca, if you are really light and color conscious, you're experiencing just about the same increase in intensity as from northern Europe to North Africa. I had experienced some of this color intensification, but it was never as dramatic because we don't use color in as dramatic a way as African people do.

### Germany

Scott: Another country that I visited was Germany, where I did see the great museums of modern art in Munich.

Buktenica: This was after you learned about the Bauhaus in France?

Scott: Yes, and I did go to see new public housing in Berlin which I had learned about from Monsieur Landau.

The Deutsches Museum, which I got to see in Munich before it burned, was another very great museum full of the latest, most advanced industrial designs. Also, I was impressed and excited by enamel work in Vienna. The Austrians were producing things that didn't show up here for many years--fine enamels,

furniture of metal and wood, some of those things which were also in Chicago. But I had never had the Chicago experience that you've had.

Buktenica: Well, mine came later. Was that when Bauhaus came to Chicago and influenced modern architecture?

Scott: Wright and Sullivan, of course, were earlier than the Bauhaus. But you were exposed to the work of these men in your early experience. My European travels opened my eyes to some of the great work going on in my own time, which my college education had not included.

My aunt came over to join me in the summer of 1931. She came on a freighter, breaking her wrist in a fall early in the voyage, which was a traumatic experience. However, I had acquired enough Italian to arrange good therapy for her in Florence. It was hot by the time she arrived, so I had to say *arrivaderci* to my friends and go over to the Adriatic for a few days at Cesenatico on the coast south of Ravenna. From there we travelled into Austria, Germany, and back to Paris.

Buktenica: What was your impression of the Adriatic?

Scott: At that time, the coast was nothing but tiny fishing villages other than Rimini, Ravenna, and Venice. Calm, blue-green water dotted with small fishing fleets with colored sails--it made good water colors, very romantic. The east coast is very flat. You had to wade out for a mile to swim. There was generally only one big hotel in a village mobbed by German people who had enough money to come there for bathing and sunning.

Mel and I drove along this whole Adriatic coast a few years ago. It is now being exploited, built up and absolutely ruined with very inferior condominiums and hotels, making a wall along the coast. It's not a good seacoast, not a good swimming area, but it's a good place for sunning. However, the demand for beach resorts is so great that this area is being badly exploited.

Corwin Mocine was over last year making a study of this particular area. France is doing the same thing. All of the coast of the Adriatic and the whole Mediterranean is being walled off by very bad resort development. The wheat fields along the Adriatic coast were full of beautiful, red poppies which are, of course, a menace. Around Ravenna and Rimini are the forests of stone pines, the natural forests that were written about by all of the great early poets of Italy--Dante, particularly. There are very few pines left now where formerly the great pine forest covered acres.

We went on to Austria and Germany. I saw the great museums and visited the English Garden in Munich. I always visited the parks and museums in every city. We spent a few days in Vienna and then came back to one of the big German spas to rest, because travel is work. We sailed on a French ship which put in at Oporto, Portugal, where I said goodbye to Europe.

By the time I returned to New York the Depression was worse than ever and I had spent most of my money. I delayed my return by booking a ship through the canal: two weeks of room and board. I went up to Harvard to see a few friends there and also went around to see the few landscape architects in New York City, trying to get a job. They were all very pleasant, and explained that they were sitting in their offices twiddling their thumbs. They had let their draftsmen go; there wasn't a single opening. But they were all very cordial. Most of them had made the grand tour of Europe as I had, and loved to talk about it. We had a friendly time, but there were no jobs.

## VIII

## SUMI PAINTING, CHIURA OBATA

Scott: Seeing an exhibit of paintings by a Japanese artist named Chiura Obata made me realize that my art education both here and in Europe had not included Asian art, which was right here in San Francisco. I began to go to Chinatown again to look at scrolls and ceramics and decided to study oriental art.

About two weeks later, I saw an ad for a summer class in Japanese brush painting to be taught by Mr. Obata. My architect friend, Honor Easton, who had been with me at the Art Academy in Rome, came up from Anaheim to join the class. We spent the whole summer studying brush painting from Chiura Obata in his Berkeley home.

That was a very great experience. From Mr. Obata we not only learned sumi brush painting, but also Zen philosophy. He would say things like, "Why are you depressed? No depression in nature. Tree just as beautiful today as yesterday, tomorrow, forever. Why are you depressed?"

Mr. Obata made us see beauty everywhere, in all of nature. His method of teaching was entirely different from anything I had ever had. We never sketched from nature. We went for long walks where we learned to see, to record mentally, to draw from memory. He took us for walks in the moonlight to show us the difference between moonlight and sunlight. To study water, we would go down to the bay shore to study the difference between water and land, to draw the motion of the waves.

He would start us off of a morning by telling us to draw anything we liked, and then he would go away. When he returned in his stocking feet--we never heard him come in--he might come up behind you and poke you in the ribs. If you jumped, he would laugh and say, "No good painting today. You are not relaxed. You go for a walk." He never spoke English well, but communicated perfectly using only a few words.

We ground our own sumi on ink stones and used only rice paper. We observed, sketched and painted for about six hours each day. We made one trip down to Point Lobos where we stayed several days with the Kodani family, who had lived there for many years. There we learned something of Japanese life and culture, eating Japanese food and enjoying authentic hot baths.

This was a marvelous experience, in spite of the Depression. Mr. Obata had a wonderful sense of humor. He was very kindly and warm, as was Mrs. Obata. There was much laughter around the dining room table where he worked. Chiura preferred to demonstrate sitting on a floor mat or tatami.

Those experiences of going walking and just looking were splendid training in visual perception. We might go to the zoo for half a day, come back, and if we didn't feel like painting animals or didn't have any vivid impressions, we watched Mrs. Obata make flower arrangements, also on the big dining table.

I really learned to see and record from that summer experience better than from anything else I have ever done. Mr. Obata was sensitive to each of his students. He encouraged me to look critically at water, really look at it, and try to understand and capture the rhythmic motions. He would ask me to paint a wave, ask what made the wave break. He had a really fine, analytical mind, and he made me analyze why water moved in certain ways.

Draw a ground plan first--draw a ground plan of the bay. Why does the water break and make white water where it makes it? For a reason. This kind of thinking is just something very, very different from any occidental teaching. Much later I learned that Leonardo da Vinci had studied, taught and wrote in the same way.

Buktenica: So this was your introduction to the art of the Japanese garden?

Scott: No, I had seen several in Honolulu as a child, and the tea garden in Golden Gate Park. Mr. Obata had a nice little Japanese garden in his back yard with some handsome stones which he maintained in perfect condition.

All sorts of people including natural scientists came to study with Mr. Obata. He had been in California since he was nineteen and had a very considerable reputation by the time we studied with him. He had been teaching in the U.C. art department for several years.



There were several very great scientists who came to have Mr. Obata teach them how to look through the microscope. There is a technique to seeing, to concentration, of deciding what you are looking for, and seeing it. These were already very accomplished scientists. There was a German, a Belgian, and a Dutchman who came that summer. They would stay for hours to look and draw. Some were botanists, one a geologist.

Mr. Obata had a phenomenal visual memory. He used to bring me a drawing of a plant made from memory for me to supply the name. It would be as accurate as any botanical drawing. His drawings were correct in every detail. Or he would say while sketching, "What pine has three needles in a bundle so long, very bitter to taste, growing at the 8,000 ft. level with a bark pattern like this?" From pure observation. He was an artist, but he worked with the concentration of a scientist.

That summer with Chiura was one of my greatest learning experiences.

Buktenica: This was only for one summer?

Scott: Only three months, but we remained friends all of our lives. It is not the length of time that is important but the intensity of the experience that counts.

Buktenica: You made a trip with him, didn't you?

Scott: Yes, that was years later, in the fall of 1954.

By then we had camped together at Fallen Leaf Lake, and also went on many hikes and picnics. The Obata family are my very good friends. Mr. Obata is now dead so I go to see Mrs. Obata, who is still teaching flower arrangement. She was given a special award by the Emperor of Japan for her flower arrangements last year.

After Pearl Harbor, when the Japanese were put in relocation camps, I corresponded with Mr. Obata, collecting and sending needed art materials for the classes he organized and taught while he was there. The whole relocation decision and action was shocking and shameful. Mel and I were living here in Berkeley at that time. Mel was working for the Natural Resources Planning Board, NRPB. Mr. Obata's friends were shocked by some who turned away from him saying that perhaps he could be a spy. If you knew anything about human nature, you knew perfectly well that Mr. Obata was not a spy.

I was able to get help for Gyo Obata, who has since become a very successful architect. When they ordered the evacuation

of the Japanese, Gyo, then a freshman in architecture at U.C., applied for permission to go to the University of Washington at St. Louis, but was refused. Mr. Obata called me to ask if I could do anything to help him. He explained that there was a case of a fellow in dentistry, a pre-med student at Cal with the same Japanese background, who had also entered a plea to go to the University of Washington in St. Louis. The authorities had approved him and refused Gyo, an obvious injustice.

We had just twelve hours to work. If the boys weren't out of town by midnight, Gyo would have to go to camp. I did know a lawyer in the judge advocates' offices of the army, who happened to be my attorney. I said I would try to bring the case to his attention. It took me about an hour and a half to get through protocol to Mr. Boekel. I explained the case as it had been told to me, and he agreed that it sounded like an injustice.

That afternoon we got Gyo over to San Francisco, the case was reviewed, and the review board agreed that either both boys had to go to camp or they both could go to St. Louis with the proviso that they leave before midnight. We spent all the rest of the day collecting enough money from friends to buy Gyo a ticket to get out of Berkeley that night. Gyo went to St. Louis and did very well there. He is brilliant.

Later he went to study with Saarinen at Cranbrook Academy where he met his wife, a weaver. Gyo was greatly influenced by Saarinen, but he went back to St. Louis and joined the firm that he is now in, Hellmuth, Obata and Kassabaum. Today, that firm has several offices, including one in San Francisco, with many distinguished projects designed by Gyo.

Another son, Kim, got a degree in art at U.C. Kim, born in California, was older, already through college at the time of the relocation. He became very cynical, understandably, and went to Japan to become a Japanese citizen after the war. There he became a successful commercial artist in Tokyo. He died in 1986.

The daughter, Uri, is married to an architect, lives here in Berkeley, and has four children. All of them are very talented. A granddaughter, Kimi Kodani, is now writing the family history.

IX                    MARIN COUNTY, VAN PELT & KNIGHT, 1933-1939

Scott:            At the end of the summer in 1933, Helen van Pelt, a landscape architect in San Anselmo, Marin County asked me to come over to do some drafting for several days. I stayed six years.

She had a few small jobs because Marin County people had helped her get through the Depression by having her direct the maintenance of their estates and do some small remodelling jobs. That first year, which was still the Depression, we just eked out a living.

Helen's house was built and owned by Miss O'Hara, a retired interior decorator, founder of the well-known firm of O'Hara, Livermore & Baken in San Francisco. She had retired before we knew her and bought several acres of property in San Anselmo on the Barber Tract, where she developed a perfectly charming house and garden, and then built a second house right on the creek, which she rented to Helen. And that is where I started working for Helen.

Helen was divorced and had two children. I lived with them in this charming but too-small house. We couldn't have made a living otherwise. There was a very small drafting room where we worked. I stayed and worked for Helen for a number of months, until she made me a partner.

I had seen Miss O'Hara wandering through the garden but didn't meet her for several months, until one day she invited me for tea. She had built a two-story house, rented the lower story, and even though she was lame, preferred to live up where she could look over her lovely garden. The house was fairly large. Her apartment was on the north side, and there was another apartment on the south side, with an open deck between them. She'd intended to close it and had never done so.

I went for tea, up the stairs and out onto this open deck, and there beheld huge clusters of light green grapes hanging

from the rafters--a stunning second story grape arbor! Decorator/artist that she was, she had painted the floor the same pale green. It was absolutely one of the most beautiful effects I have ever seen. And in a niche in the gable end was a marvelous, glazed ceramic sculpture of John the Baptist by Della Robbia. She had travelled all over the world and collected marvelous things. We became very good friends. Miss O'Hara was completely Irish, had a great sense of humor, loved to laugh, and understood people.

Miss O'Hara could see the difficulty that Helen and I were having in trying to live together--it was very difficult to get along with Helen--so she said I could live with her in the far apartment, which was really her guest room. It was a typical cold water flat. I lived there for three years and never had hot water. But living with Miss O'Hara was worth it.

The partnership of Van Pelt and Knight went on for about three years. When we broke up the partnership we continued to share a new studio built for us on the street side of Miss O'Hara's garden, each doing her own jobs. Helen was a good garden designer, used plants with sensitivity, but lacked construction know-how. She was a good starter, weak on follow-through, and I ended up doing a disproportionate amount of the work.

As the Depression came to an end, things began to pick up. There were no landscape construction companies nor contractors. To get a garden installed you had to scurry around and find a stonemason here, a gardener there, or a carpenter to build a fence. As more sizeable jobs came in, we had to develop our own construction company. Each landscape architect did. Tommy Church had his own. Punk [H. Leland] and Adele Vaughan had their own companies. Helen and I had to develop our own.

We began by taking fellows off relief, if someone with skill showed up. Finally, we developed a crew of six to eight men. This process had a lot of merit, and I learned much by doing it, but it also had a lot of headaches.

When work was not plentiful we got to the point of taking jobs just in order to keep those men going, because we couldn't bear to let them off. They had been on relief for a long period of time, we knew their family situations, and we took jobs we didn't want to do just to keep those fellows working. At a time like that, all the human problems of labor relations arise. We let mistakes go by because that was the level of skills our crew had. We could not hold up a really high standard of construction with the kinds of people we were able

to hire. Nevertheless it was a great learning experience for all. Several of our men became landscape contractors.

I had seen all sorts of landscape construction when I worked for A.E. Hanson, where costs were seldom a factor. I knew how landscape construction ought to be done with high standards, so it was particularly distressing to me that I couldn't get the same standards of work. Slowly we dropped people off, picked up others to form a better crew. I knew more about construction than Helen, so I was doing the drawings and supervision and running the crew.

Buktenica: How did you organize the job financially? How did you charge?

Scott: Just straight cost plus.

Buktenica: Did you separate your design from the construction?

Scott: Yes, we charged for design on a fee basis and supervision on an hourly basis. The men turned in time sheets, and we gave our clients the whole work schedule of time and materials. Our own time was charged out for design and supervision at different rates. Labor was charged at cost plus to pay insurance and overhead. We had to keep detailed job records, buy tools, store them for the men to check out. I had to learn all the details of contracting--a big headache.

A that time there was what was called the "Old Guard" in Marin, mainly New England people who had built summer homes in Marin County and later became year-round residents. They loved the County and prided themselves that there were no Marin County people on relief during the Depression. (Indeed there were fewer on public relief in Marin County than in other counties.) The "Old Guard" were people who had a sense of social responsibility, and they found jobs for those on relief through the Marin County Red Cross employment office in Marin County. In another community I think we might not have been able to build our own landscape crew.

The "Old Guard" was loyal to Helen Van Pelt, who had been living in Marin County for several years. Helen had a lot of charm and made friends easily. She was a Smith graduate, and a lot of our clients were Smith graduates. She belonged to the exclusive Marin County Garden Club, and was well known. I was made an associate member of the Marin Garden Club later on.

Helen and I started the Marin Garden Center with the backing of Mrs. Livermore, Mrs. Dibblee, and the Marin Garden Club. It was in Gerstle Memorial Park in San Rafael at first, and was later moved to Ross. Also, the Marin Conservation

League developed at about this time. Helen Van Pelt, Mrs. Livermore and Mrs. Evers were really the founders. I did not take an active part because we couldn't both take an active part and do everything else that had to be done in our office.

I was running the office, and Helen was the joiner. She was twenty years older than I, an outgoing, very gregarious woman. She belonged to every organization, was very good in group activities, and also at getting jobs, a starter, not a finisher. But we did complement each other in a number of ways.

Mr. Ben Dibblee, an early citizen of Ross, took a great fancy to me and was really my patron all the time I was in Marin County, ultimately introducing me to many clients. Mr. Dibblee was one of the earliest citizens of Ross. He and his father planted most of the elm trees that line the streets of Ross, which later got the Dutch elm disease.

The Dibblees came from New England and had a great feeling of civic pride. Ben Dibblee had known and loved the county from boyhood, every hill and valley from Sausalito to Pt. Reyes. He took me to see various choice parts of Marin, beautiful groves of old trees, native plants, and established gardens, which he thoroughly loved. He also had a great collection of paintings, and was very knowledgeable about music.

Ben used to call and say in a very snarly voice, "Miss Knight, are you busy? If I send the chauffeur, could you come over for an hour?" I would often go over to his very beautiful old house, to listen to music or talk about gardens.

Other times his chauffeur would drive us to Nicasio to look at a great wisteria on an old farm house there, or to see the Russian lime kilns near the Bear Valley Road. It was a great privilege to know Ben Dibblee.

Never again did I have such wonderful clients as those in Marin County. They were a different breed from the kinds of people that I had to deal with when I worked for A.E. Hanson. Marin County is a very beautiful county, and the people who were there loved it and wanted to preserve that beauty. They loved the native plants, and above all were proud of the fact that Mt. Tamalpais and Muir Woods had been reserved for public use.

Buktenica: One time you commented that they took pride in the fact that there were few Cadillacs in Marin County.

Scott: Yes, the people I knew in Marin County were generally not ostentatious.

I wish somebody had made tape recordings of Marin Garden Club meetings, because they were precious. The ladies would come in, very wealthy, but they would all be in the simplest cotton dresses even to meetings at the Meadow Club. Marin Garden Club meetings were mostly indignation meetings over unlicensed billboards or roadside litter. They drove old stations wagons in which they transported illegal roadside signs to the dump for burning (not yet illegal).

Most of them were Republicans but they were open-minded. They recognized that I was a Democrat and used to bait me a little, but not often. You could have an honest disagreement with any of them expressing your feelings and they respected you for your opinions. They supported Van Pelt and Knight to the end of the Depression.

I had one client, however, who was rather unpleasant. One Sunday morning he called me and wanted me to come up to his place. But my car needed repair. Right then Tony Milani, an Italian supply dealer from whom we got fertilizer, stone, and soil, came by to see if we needed anything. (Tony had no telephone. He wasn't going to be bothered by one, especially on weekends.) I told him I needed transportation to see our irate client. He offered to take me in his huge, old wreck of a truck to the garden on top of the hill.

The owner, whom Tony knew, berated me with loud curses for something that had or had not been done. After the heated discussion, we returned through San Rafael back to San Anselmo. Without explanation, Tony parked the truck and departed into a fine Italian delicatessen. There were many Italians living in San Rafael then, mostly fishermen or Sicilian gardeners and stonemasons. Half an hour later, Tony returned with two packages. He threw one in my lap and put one by his side, explaining that when people are nasty the best thing to do is to go have a good Italian meal and forget them. He had bought Italian ham, bologna, and cheese, to restore my spirits.

In general, Marin people were exceedingly kind and considerate. If something went wrong, they were the kind of people that recognized there was a reason why a mistake had been made and they didn't blow up. We generally resolved a problem together.

I recall another curious problem caused by our own good masons--two Italian masons and one old Swedish man. They were all exceptionally good masons who had built many handsome stone

walls for us. I taught them to lay the stones without mortar like walls in Italy and Majorca. In this instance, they built a big barbecue into the side of the hill. The site was very pleasant, under some oaks. The barbecue, about three feet high of stones from Sonoma County with nice weathered faces, fit into the hill.

I saw the job on Friday morning when it was going well, then went away for the weekend. When I came back Sunday night there was a call from an unhappy client who asked if I had seen the stone work? I said I had seen it Friday morning. He insisted that I come see it again, right then. It was dark, so I said I'd be up the first thing in the morning.

When I arrived I was shocked. It's one of the things workmen do sometimes. After the Italian masons finished the wall, they decided to point the stonework with colored mortar. Do you know what this means?

Buktenica: Mortar, colored mortar! Oh, my God!

Scott: They had never done anything like that before, and they had stayed overtime to do it as a special favor. They thought they had done a great thing, were proud of it.

I was flabbergasted; the owner, one of the top engineers on the Oakland Bay Bridge, which was being built at that time, was irate. It took quite awhile to get him calmed down. His specifications were exact, and he couldn't understand how a thing like this could happen. He had communicated with people who were as educated as he was, but he had never communicated directly with workmen at the level of our masons, so it took a lot of doing to convince him that it was their decision.

He wanted us to rebuild it. I refused to do it over, and told him that instead the joints would have to be chiseled out and repointed, a tricky, time-consuming job. When he asked who would pay for it, I said it was an honest mistake, but if he couldn't see it that way, I would have to pay for it. That work took a long time, but before it was all chiseled out he understood and decided to go halves on the cost. Workmen do things like that once in awhile. They have their own ideas. They were proud of their work, which is a kind of stone work done in parts of Italy and Mexico.

Buktenica: What kind of gardens did you design in Marin?

Scott: I suppose you could call them naturalistic. They fit into their wooded hillside sites. We tried, as I always did, to solve the living problem. People need places to live outdoors



in that ideal climate. I never had any flat residential sites, often very steep hills requiring many walls. With the oaks and madrones, I felt that the stone walls were more appropriate than brick.

We designed some gardens in town that were a little more stylized, more precise in detail. Our clients wanted small lawns, a place for their children to play, generally quite small. Even then, I argued against lawns if they didn't have children. I never could see much reason for a lawn in California. Most clients liked plants and took great pride in raising them. Some were exceptionally good gardeners.

I felt that the biggest problem was always in trying to make the transition from the house and the architectural terrace to the natural, tree-covered hillside. The view was generally over a valley or toward Mt. Tamalpais. The crux of the problem in Marin County is putting the house into its site.

Buktenica: So most of your work was residential work?

Scott: There wasn't any other private landscape work at that time. There wasn't any anywhere in northern California. There was no building during the Depression, but as it eased off, there was a great backlog of work to be done. A few subdivisions and schools were started. The first new school in Marin County was built in 1941-42.

One of the good experiences for me in this period was learning to evaluate the trees on a site. All of the building sites in Marin County had many trees. Whether they were on hillsides or on the lowlands, I never had a really flat site or a treeless site to design. Many exotic trees had been planted among the native trees. Removing trees to create or shape spaces is a form of sculptural art.

In southern California the design jobs started out as bald or naked sites, sometimes with only a few bushes, but mostly bare, often with poor soil. Working for a man [A.E. Hanson] whose speciality was moving trees, we moved in trees and created spaces with trees. My experience was exactly the opposite in Marin County. I had to learn to visualize the size and shape of a sky-hole before I made one, that is, which trees to remove.

Also, the people in Marin County loved trees, so it was a battle sometimes to get any trees removed. Often there was little sunlight. Clients wanted sunlight, but they didn't want to give up their trees. Many discussions occurred over trying to create spatial experiences. There was also the problem of

fire hazard, of getting trees away from the houses to reduce the fire hazard. Marin County has very much more rainfall than the East Bay or South Peninsula, but it also gets very hot in the summertime when trees and grasses dry up very quickly, becoming a fire hazard. There have been some terrible fires in Marin County.

I designed a little park for the town of Ross. Ross was governed by a twelve man town council like a New England town. Mr. Dibblee was a member of the council. The citizens of Ross had set aside a square, a piece of land with a lot of trees on it to be used as a town common. There were some oaks, bay trees, and alders along a creek on one side of the square. There were also some elms planted there by Ben Dibblee and his father. Other trees had seeded in. It was a messy grove. There were no play spaces in Ross, and the town fathers had all agreed that some play spaces were needed, a place large enough where kids could play softball, at least.

Most of the people that lived in Marin County had gardens with trees, but little or no spaces. Tree removal was the only solution. Mr. Dibblee and I first decided to remove all the poor, crowded, diseased trees as a number one cutting, and then take another look to decide where we could really open up a space. This was done without plan, because the council didn't want to pay for a survey. Decisions were made on the site usually, which, after all, is the best way.

We cut only the diseased trees, but the town rose up in arms. You would have thought they were all Druids. Mr. Dibblee had to have his phone disconnected. They threatened him; they threatened me. It was, without a doubt, one of the wildest political hassles I have ever been through.

You would have thought that we had cut every tree down. We kept saying, "Within a year you will not even know a tree has been taken out." They wouldn't listen. That argument went on for a year-and-a-half. The town fathers were finally convinced when a year later they really couldn't see where trees had come out. We finally convinced them that if they wanted any sunlight or open space more trees would have to be cut, and the remaining trees would be healthier.

- Buktenica: Was there any citizen input before you took the trees out?
- Scott: Only the town council of twelve men who were representative citizens.
- Buktenica: Then the citizens really weren't participating?

Scott: Only by protesting to their councilmen.

At that time, there wasn't any county newspaper, or any Ross newspaper. Ross is a town like Hillsborough, without any business area. It's a residential community where the grapevine works very fast. When people saw the tree men in there cutting the trees and carting them away, it didn't take very long for the news to spread.

Inviting citizen participation in public works came very much later. I am talking about 1935 and '36. A year-and-a-half later, we were allowed to cut more trees to create a space, though not really enough space. Slowly, over the years, they had to cut more and more trees because there really wasn't enough play space for softball. There wasn't enough backfield space and their own children began to be hurt running into trees which weren't even good trees.

Tree removal is a valuable experience for a designer. Sometimes very good trees have to come out and it takes a good deal of explaining, and a good deal of courage to cut down good trees. It takes a good deal of courage and knowledge to even prune very good trees without destroying their form or character.

One of my clients in Marin was a big real estate man who owned a farm down in the San Joaquin Valley. After I completed his garden, which was on a very steep site, he took me down to see property near Modesto. There was a site absolutely flat as a pancake. I had never had a completely flat site to design. I found it a difficult thing to do. I had become so immersed in this hillside problem in Marin, and even though I had worked on some almost flat sites in southern California, when I was really on my own to handle one, I had a terrible time building up spaces.

Buktenica: You were still in Marin at that time?

Scott: Yes, I did work all around the Bay Region.

The other good experience during those Depression years was learning about local climate. Marin County has many hills, and although Mt. Tamalpais isn't a very great mountain, it has a great effect on the weather, on the rainfall, and on the frost patterns of Marin County. I had gardens to design that were on this hill, or that hill, or halfway down a slope, so I had to learn to be very sensitive to the climate or orientation.

### California Horticultural Society

Scott: Another great learning experience at this time was a terrible freeze that occurred in the Bay Region in 1935. The result of that was the formation of the California Horticultural Society, of which I was a charter member, along with Helen Van Pelt and many garden people. It was the worst freeze that had ever been in anybody's memory. So nurserymen, professionals, and amateurs were all in the same predicament of not knowing what to do. The horticultural society which formed then has become a very fine organization producing a prize-winning journal, now called Pacific Horticulture.

For the first two or three years, the discussions were concerned with frost damage, how to treat the plants that had suffered. Many old trees and shrubs were badly burned in that frost. A leader in that society was James West, a great botanist (really a German prince incognito, who lived in this region at the time). He and Eric Walther, head gardener at Golden Gate Park at that time, and Victor Reiter, a San Francisco nurseryman, were the leaders in forming this horticultural society.

James West collected native plant specimens and built handsome rock gardens using alpine plants. He also helped build the large succulent garden at UC Botanical Garden. He used to take me plant hunting with him, to be his eyes, for he was myopic. He taught me about plant communities. We made many trips to the high mountains, trips all over Marin County to find native plants, both rare and common. He would describe the plant he was looking for, so that I could spot it for him. James West, who died many years ago, has been written up in the horticultural society journals.

He was sent by Dr. Goodspeed on a plant hunting expedition to South America to collect. The University of California wanted full credit for his discoveries. Mysteriously he disappeared while in South America, seemed to be lost, but reappeared at a botanical symposium in Germany.

### Association of Landscape Architects

Scott: There was a chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) in southern California, and one up here,

which had eight or ten members, both formed in 1937, the year I became a member. A few years later, the local chapter members became disenchanted with the head office of ASLA in Boston. The ASLA collected exorbitant dues and did absolutely nothing for the local western chapters. There wasn't any real direction from the national office whose officers were very snooty.

An anonymously written article appeared in Harper's magazine, entitled "The Landscape Priesthood," which really took the society apart. We all felt that they acted superior although they knew nothing about our western problems and apparently cared less. When we appealed for guidance or information, we got nothing.

A group of landscape architects pulled out of ASLA to form the Association of Landscape Architects of the San Francisco Bay Region, the ALA. Professor Vaughan was the first president of ALA, an organization which really studied local problems, such as having no landscape contractors to install our designs, and our special climate, soil and watering problems.

Landscape architecture was still in its infancy in California. The eastern officers couldn't understand our problems because they had had landscape contractors to do their work for a long time. In this region we had our own problems and we attacked them, generally meeting in San Francisco. Like the big frost that pulled together people in the horticultural field, this real need to solve local problems brought together almost all of the practicing landscape designers to form the ALA, many more than the few members of ASLA.

The ALA lasted several years, long enough to make a dent on the ASLA and make that organization realize that it had to serve the chapters, that the chapters didn't exist for the home society. The head office of ASLA was moved out of Boston to Washington, D.C., and it was a Californian, Lynn Harris, who went from California to be the new director of the ASLA.

I was too involved to think much about ASLA and stayed out for a long time. I didn't go back until 1961 when I was reinstated. After ALA had accomplished what we wanted to accomplish, there was no real need for the organization except to represent those people who were not members of ASLA. Later the CALA developed as a state organization.

The idea of registration was proposed by Harry Shepherd of ALA, who was still a professor at the University, and Raymond Page in Los Angeles. Professor Vaughan and quite a few others were against registration because we felt that registration

could mean just another bureaucratic organization. We didn't believe that registration would necessarily insure quality.

However, a majority of members voted for it, and California became the first state to enact legislation requiring registration of landscape architects. Registration did set standards and later we learned that for government work it was important to be licensed. At that time, however, most of the jobs were residential without any public liability. Professor Shepherd was looking ahead, seeing that the field of landscape architecture was broadening to include public work.

### Chinese Art

Scott: Another one of my side activities while I was in Marin County was studying Chinese art. University Extension, then on Powell Street above Sutter in San Francisco, offered a course in the history of Chinese art, about which I knew nothing. The course was given by Henry Hart, an importer who had made many trips to China, and spoke many of the Chinese dialects. University Extension invited him to give a series of three, one-term courses.

Mr. Hart gave a brief history of China first, and then a history of Chinese art, which he illustrated with fine examples from his private collection. Most of the class were interested in porcelain or early Chinese bronzes. I was the only landscape architect in that class. When he learned of my interest, he lent me many rare old books on Chinese gardens.

### Rudolph Schaeffer School of Design

Scott: After that course, I enrolled in a course in color from the Rudolph Schaeffer School of Design. Rudolph Schaeffer's school was probably the nearest thing to the Chicago Art Institute that we ever had in this area. He was a fine colorist, who also had a good collection of Chinese art. The Schaeffer School of Design is still going [1976] although Schaeffer is ninety.

Schaeffer had accumulated Chinese silks, dyed cottons, porcelain and glazes, samples of everything you could imagine to illustrate color and texture. He would show us the

difference between identical chroma on a textured surface and a non-textured surface.

This was an important learning experience. I have had other courses in color, but none could equal his. He also had good equipment for projecting and mixing light, a color wheel. He had us make color wheels to learn to evaluate hue and value optically. After my direct color experience in Tunis, this course, which formalized what was then known about color theory, was valuable training. I am certain it was of great value in teaching later. All this work was outside of UC proper, and very much more advanced than anything the universities were then teaching.

#### Some Marin County Jobs

Scott: The Kent family is one of the important families of Marin. Alice Kent and Mrs. William Kent were fine women. Before Kent Woodlands was developed, I designed the new place for Mrs. William Kent, Sr. I had the pleasure of placing a lot of Adaline Kent's sculpture in her garden. Adaline Kent had married into the [John Galen] Howard family.

I also knew the sculpture of Bob Howard and the works of Henry Howard, the painter, and other good, early Bay Region art. I knew these talented people and had the pleasure of working with them. I also planned the Roger Kent estate, and besides the new place for Mrs. William Kent, the Faskin, Manning, Cornwall, Forbes and many of the first families in Marin County estates were planned by me.

At about this time, I came to the attention of Henry Gutterson, a former associate of Maybeck doing very fine houses and buildings in Marin, San Francisco, Berkeley and Contra Costa County, for which I designed the gardens. The Flammer house by Henry Gutterson is on a very steep site in Ross for Henry Gutterson.

That was a particularly interesting job because it was for an older couple, and the wife's blind father, who was particularly fond of plants. I had to work out a safe route for him to walk around that hillside to experience the feel and smell of the garden. We had interesting talks about the plants that we put in for him to enjoy.

I remember particularly making a corner bench shaded by a copper beech tree. He asked for a copper beech even though he

couldn't see the color. He knew by feel the little, sharp, pointed buds of the beech, the smoothness of the trunk, and the feel of the twigs. He could describe the tree clearly. It was a wonderful experience to work with that old man, one I'll never forget. The garden was quite architectural, an extension of the English, half-timber house. We built very high, dry stone walls, with pockets for trailing plants in the English manner. We worked out a plant palette including mostly plants with fragrance.

I never had another experience of planning for a blind person; it was a special experience. Mr. Flammer was a spice expert with the Folger Spice Company. He, too, had a highly developed sense of smell, but it was his father-in-law who had lived with them for years who was the blind man. They all enjoyed the fragrance of plants very much.

I said I had had only one unpleasant client in Marin County, but I remember another, a newcomer who moved into a house where the basement flooded the first winter. We had built a retaining wall above the house, and he threatened me with a lawsuit, saying that it was my fault that his basement was flooded in that terribly heavy rainfall year. He didn't actually sue because I got my attorney on the job right away.

My attorney recognized his name as a big insurance executive. He warned that the man knew how to collect, and if he could get us to admit guilt, he could collect not only from us but from his insurance company. Anyway, it was not my fault. I had nothing to do with the leak in a pipe way up the hill on another piece of property, which had found a water-bearing stratum leading the water down onto his property. However, it took a bit of doing to prove that was so.

From that experience, I learned how to spot the water-bearing strata that are in Marin County and through all of this region. When the highway department came along and graded for the Waldo cut to the Golden Gate Bridge, I could recognize the porous strata, but engineers didn't seem to. Water kept coming through the cut and the whole hill collapsed. They had to cut that slope back over and over again until they finally got back far enough to change the drainage pattern. I worked with a number of engineers in Marin County and finally decided that my observations were as good as theirs and sometimes better.

There were few if any soil engineers about. There were people called foundation engineers, but the profession was not so specialized at that time. When engineers went out on sites, they didn't spend half as much time as I did. They didn't really explore a site or take soil cores. I began to trust my



own judgement and to put in more and more and more drainage to take care of these problems. I got through my whole professional experience without ever having a lawsuit, which I don't think all of my colleagues can say. Maybe I was lucky, because I have had some really tough problems to handle.

I also learned to recognize that there were a few things that I couldn't handle and refused to try. One of them was the Hiller Highlands subdivision which I refused, absolutely.

Buktenica: Now, what is Hiller Highlands?

Scott: It's a subdivision above Tunnel Road, way up high in the East Bay hills. I don't think that property should ever have been subdivided. I think it should have been left as open space. Later, Royston's firm designed it, together with many engineers.

Buktenica: Aren't there magnificent views from there?

Scott: Oh, yes, indeed. There are now homes, a club house, and some condominiums. It's fully developed. I knew the property before development. They have had plenty of trouble up there because that's a slippage area. I don't think it should ever have been allowed.

The property belonged to Mr. Hiller, who was greedy. I knew him. He already had millions, and didn't need to subdivide that land. His wife later divorced him, partly because she was against subdividing that land. He could have afforded to give it to the county, left it as a park, which people begged him to do. Mr. Hiller, Sr. was a genius, an inventor who made millions off his inventions, so he didn't need to make more money off of the land.

There were a few other places where, if I didn't like the project, I said, "No, I won't have anything to do with it. I don't believe in it and I am not going to be a party to it."

A few times in my practice I have felt that engineers came to me because I was a woman landscape architect, and they thought I wouldn't fight with them. Sometimes they wanted to locate structures above their too-steeply engineered slopes and have me plant the slope so it would look better. They thought that I would be pleased to go along with their sort of economy. I turned down a number of such jobs.

I may be wrong, but I suspect that those engineers might have been turned down by other landscape architects, but they thought that I, being a woman, wouldn't be strong enough to

fight them. Sometimes those jobs have been done by other landscape architects, well-done or poorly done as the case may be. However, I wasn't going to be brow-beaten into accepting engineered slopes which they felt were adequate, but ugly.

Buktenica: All of your partners have been women?

Scott: I have only had two, yes.

Buktenica: Did you ever consider a partnership with a man?

Scott: It just never developed. I worked with Willa Cloys Carmack earlier. Before I went to work for A.E. Hanson, I did free-lance work for everybody around here--Gregg, Shepherd, Willa Cloys. Willa I liked enormously, and I believe that Willa and I could have formed a partnership that might have lasted, but Willa had an impossible husband, Bob Carmack, whom she brought into her office.

Bob didn't really have knowledge, hadn't been trained, but he had the gift of gab. He could talk himself into a job, then go right on talking and talk himself out of the job. That association might have been three-way, but I couldn't accept Bob. Willa and I saw eye-to-eye in almost everything. She was a sensitive woman who knew plants, had an intuitive way of working that was marvelous. I have seen many of her jobs later and know we could have waltzed together easily. We remained friends until she died.

Buktenica: Do you ever regret never having expanded your offices?

Scott: Well, not exactly.

Buktenica: Most of the firms in that period didn't get larger?

Scott: Some began to get a little larger, not many. Tommy Church never enlarged his firm. Tommy had two or three draftsmen and a secretary.

Buktenica: Tommy and Doug Baylis were about the only ones that really stayed small? And you?

Scott: Art Cobbledick never had a partner. Alan Reed never had more than one draftsman at a time. It was some years after World War II before offices began to grow, and they didn't expand until they got big jobs requiring a lot of working drawings and specifications, such as public work, where you had to refine your specifications and contract all installations.

Much later, when you were here in my office, I would like to have applied for some of the larger jobs, but I knew I didn't have sufficient staff to perform. I would have had to link up with some other firm in order to do them or build up my own firm. By that time I was already teaching, and I knew I couldn't handle both jobs.

I loved Marin County and hated to leave it. If it had been possible to develop a bigger office, I might have stayed there. It was a beautiful place to live and I had the very nicest clients I ever had in my life. Years later I designed gardens for the daughters and sons of many of my former clients, and even for one or two of their grandchildren. They were very fine people. Slow to take you in, but once they did, they remained your friends forever. Just last year the Marin Garden Club wanted me to take them through the Oakland Museum, but right at that time I had to have an operation.

My last and most interesting job in this partnership was for Pacific House on Treasure Island, the 1939 World's Fair. Dr. Philip Youtz, architect and museum director from the Brooklyn Museum, was director of that great conceptual project which brought together the culture of those countries banding the Pacific Ocean--that is, the Pacific Rim, long before that term was minted. My job was to prepare an exhibit of living specimens of the food and fibre plants of the Pacific Rim countries. These were also depicted by Miguel Covarrubias in four large maps of the continents bordering the Pacific Ocean.

The building was still under construction when Dr. Youtz invited me to go over the plans with him. I immediately requested special floor bracing and ventilation high in each window bay, which was promised but not provided. Many things went wrong or had to be rearranged at the site, a characteristic of all expositions. Worst of all, the Expo Company was poorly organized financially and changed directors and administration several times. It was chaotic until the last hour before opening.

This was "interiorscaping" in 1939. The conservatory in Golden Gate Park was the best research source for my study to select examples of appropriate plants in each category, to arrange in four groups within the great bay windows of the square building designed by William Merchant. I had learned all the large nurseries and plant importers while working for A.E. Hanson. After making a preferred list of specimen plants with alternates in each design category, I visited every large nursery in central and southern California.

All experienced nurserymen I talked with, such as Evans & Reeves, were skeptical that the plants would survive the duration of the Exposition. The huge banana trees and other tropical plants had to be transported on open track trailers over the Ridge Route, as they were not permitted on Route 101. An early snowfall while in transit turned the leaves to green slush, and palm fronds brown. To our amazement and delight, the thirty-foot specimens responded promptly once inside the building, sending forth new leaves.

The plants had to remain in their crude structural boxes while carpenters, under my direction, devised new screens to face each continental exhibit and yet allow for ease of maintenance. No two containers were of the same height, width or depth. Many weighed more than a ton. Somehow, without proper equipment but with plenty of ingenuity, the exhibition of living specimens of the food and fibre plants of the Pacific area took shape and added charm to that large, plain building.

As wonderful as my life and experiences in Marin County were, it was a period of great political upheaval in our country. Hitler was in power. There were "America Firsters" and all sorts of political groups being founded. Many of my clients were America Firsters, which meant they were exceedingly reactionary.

At the same time, living with Miss O'Hara, who was Irish and much interested in politics, with friends of all persuasions visiting her, I was hearing all kinds of political talk. O'Hara, as an Irish person, loved to mix up people. She loved to bring together people who were extreme reactionaries and extreme radicals. Her parties were famous. Her personality made them popular.

Miss O'Hara would put on a big Sunday party, inviting people she knew from all around the Bay Region and when the talk would get too hot politically, she would say, "Well, I'm tired now," and she would go up to her room for a nap. Why the parties didn't end up with fist fights I'll never know, except the guests were ladies and gentlemen.

She was in her late seventies or eighties. She had been retired a long time. One of her dearest friends was Beatrice Kinkead, an avowed Communist Party member. She worked on me, very considerably, to join the party. She got me going to various Communist meetings in San Francisco. Beatrice was very glib, as are many Communist party members. Beatrice would tell me that I was too smart to accept all the political balderdash that was going around in Marin County. She encouraged me to go to San Francisco for meetings. So I would go to meetings. But

I always seemed to find a flaw in her arguments or in those of the meetings I attended.

However, those meetings did make me think. They made me realize, even more than I had when I had been in Europe, the great difference between wealthy and poor people, reminding me that I was in a profession that catered entirely to wealthy people, which wasn't very satisfying because I was well aware of the problems. As I told you, I had gone to see public housing in Germany when I had been there some years before, and I was interested in this problem of housing people. I had seen too many levels of living to be content with continually designing charming gardens for charming people without any social significance to my work.

### Southwest Summer, 1935

[This section was dictated by Mrs. Scott, but was not included in the final manuscript.]

Scott:

In the summer of 1935 I was invited down to Santa Fe, New Mexico. Many of the landscape architects who had graduated with me had gone into the National Park Service, and some of the fellows invited me down for the summer. There was one married couple, so I lived with them. All the other fellows were just great pals.

The southern National Parks were just starting then. They were having a perfectly wonderful time developing Mesa Verde National Park and Chaco Canyon. They were employed as landscape architects trying to decide where to set up camp sites and visitor centers and pedestrian and vehicular circulation. Basic planning. The lands had been set aside either as monuments or parks but they had not been developed at all.

That was a marvelous experience, discovering the Southwest. The couple I stayed with, Chuck Ritchie and his wife, lived in a water tower that had been built by the Navajo Indians. We went up and down on ladders from floor to floor. In all of the cave dwellings, that's the way you get from floor to floor. They walk down the ladder face forward. I got very good at doing this. The tower was four floors. We slept on the roof.

A friend, another landscape architect, was going to come to New Mexico and drive me back to San Francisco. The Ritchies

had a little dog who decided to go down the ladder with me the night before I was supposed to go back to San Francisco. He threw me and I fell ten feet onto a concrete hearth and I cracked my back. They took me to a little Catholic hospital in Albuquerque and the nuns taped it and gave me some painkillers and we drove from there to San Francisco, straight through. It was taped up for a very long time until the fracture mended sufficiently.

I was in New Mexico for a couple of months that summer. The Navajo live in villages. We were staying in Mesa Verde. The fellows would take me out where they were working. There were scientists down there doing archeological digs and there were engineers surveying to lay out a visitor's center and so forth. The fellows were excited. It was a wonderful experience for them as it was for me just to see.

They could only work in the summertime because that's high and snow country. They were doing their field work in the summer and then they would go into the head office and put it together in the wintertime. But they were learning and terribly excited about what they were finding. There is very little that has been written about that area yet.

There were Indians everywhere, and they were employing some Indians in this work. The Navajos are very silent people. They're hard to draw out. You would communicate with them and tell them all kinds of things, and they never answered. So you wouldn't know what they're thinking. There were several who had had good educations and come back and were working on the reservations.

The Indians have a great sense of humor and they love practical jokes. They do things such as, seeing people sitting out in the desert, they might come up unseen and start throwing rocks to confuse them. These university fellows would come down and were so smart. What they would think were natural phenomena were really jokes being played by the Indians.



Top: Geraldine Knight and Mellier Scott on their wedding day, February 25, 1939, in Marin County. Bottom left: Mel Scott, at home. Bottom right: Gerrie Scott, on a trip to Italy.





# X MARRIAGE, 1939, EUROPEAN HOUSING STUDY, NORTHERN EUROPE AND RUSSIA

During my plant hunting trips to southern California, I renewed my friendship with Mel Scott, who lived in Los Angeles and was involved in the strike of the Hollywood Citizen News, which purported to be a liberal paper, where he had been editorial writer. In a shift to a conservative stance, the editor fired some of the writers, using economy as the excuse. That was as exciting an experience for Mel as the Pacific House project at Treasure Island was for me.

Mel was a very politically conscious person who became interested in the problem of migratory workers, especially their poor housing. He had written many editorials on this subject in southern California. We had both been reading Lewis Mumford and Catherine Bauer and found we had similar views on the terrible disparity between the housing of the wealthy and the housing of the poor people in this country.

My social consciousness had been growing. I was ready for a change. We decided to get married and go to Europe to study public housing, because this was where public housing had really advanced. Sweden and Holland had done the most public housing.

Through his connections, Mel was named a delegate to the International Conference on Housing and Town Planning, which was to be held in Stockholm in July of 1939. We were married in February and sailed on a freighter in March, the day after the Exposition opened, from New York to Antwerp, an eight day crossing. Street flower stalls with great bunches of lilacs and spring bulbs greeted us in every square, in spite of bitter cold and light snow. We took time to see the great paintings of Brueghel before starting our study of public housing--everything that had been built.

The International Federation for Housing and Town Planning had headquarters in nearly every large city in every country in Europe. We immediately made contact with headquarters and from them got introductions to the housing authorities in every city, who treated us very well. We were among the first Americans to be interested in European housing. People were generous, often escorting us to see each project in detail.

Every day was scheduled to include museums, theaters, palaces and cathedrals. We were very well aware that war was imminent, for many cities were digging air raid shelters or practicing blackouts. Mel felt that all of the great art was going to be wiped off the face of the earth, and since he had never been in Europe before, he must see it all. So we put in fourteen and sixteen hours a day seeing public housing and art.

I knew some of the cities, which helped in getting about, but it was then that Mel made me aware of the importance of population. He wanted to know the population of Antwerp, Amsterdam, and every other city we visited. Mel would start by getting statistics on population, and the breakdown of the wealth of families.

We went from Belgium and Holland into France and down to Italy. It had been our intention to go to Russia. Mel had arranged before we left to buy our Intourist visas for Russia. As a newspaper man, Mel had an AP correspondent's pass, but did not put down "newspaperman" on his passport because he knew he might be suspect in Russia. We were to pick up our actual visas, that is, have them stamped in our passports in Rome, but after one trip to the Russian embassy in Rome, we were followed everywhere. This spoiled Rome for Mel and was a great disappointment for me.

In the meantime, Hitler had taken Czechoslovakia so we could not go through that country. We had to change our route to get into Russia, which made it difficult to get the visas. Mel made many trips to the embassy in Rome without success. It was peculiar to be picking up a visa for a communist country in a fascist country. He would take a carrozza to the embassy and come back disconsolate. Nobody would see him, or there would be nobody who spoke English at the embassy.

I could see Mel was terribly disappointed, so I said I would try with my childish Italian. I took a cab to the embassy, and I was lucky because the ambassador was there. He spoke English perfectly and we had a very nice chat. He asked why we wanted so much to go to Russia. I said that we were studying public housing, that we had seen it in every country in Western Europe, and wanted to see what the Russians had done in public housing. He answered, "We haven't done very much and it's very bad, but if you want to see it, there is no reason why you shouldn't go." Whereupon, he took our passports and stamped in the visas.

I took our passports back to the hotel triumphantly. Mel said, "How did you get the visas?" I said, "That's my secret. I'm not going to tell you." Mel didn't know what I had had to do to get the visas, so I teased him with this for a long time before I told him that it was all very simple. However, it didn't turn out to be simple, because our planned route had to be changed, and the visas set an impossible date for our entry into Russia.

The only other way for us to get into Russia was via Budapest, Hungary, and Lvov, Poland, entering at Shepatovka. When we got to the telegraph office in Budapest and said we wanted to send a telegram, Budapest said there was no such place as Shepatovka. Mel was onto this trick, so he put down the money and demanded that the telegram be sent.

We went from Budapest into Poland, and from there on a sealed car, because the train goes through the tip of Czechoslovakia. From the Polish border to Sheptovka, we were on a Polish-Russian train consisting of an engine, one coach, and a caboose, and we were the only two, small people on that train. It was, indeed, a very scary performance. This was July 1939, before war was declared. Britain declared war in September. Everybody had said it was going to be either the end of August or the first of September. We knew they were right, but we had to see Russia.

The train just crawled across the border. There were men with machine guns stationed about every hundred feet on both sides of the border for at least a mile. When we got to Shepatovka, they unlocked the coach and in came a nice looking young woman who said, "Mr. and Mrs. Scott, I believe." The telegram had obviously been sent, and the Intourist girl was there to meet us. This is the way it was all the way through Russia. We were treated very well, indeed.

We were traveling third class in Russia. Mel had bought third-class accommodations in Russia through Intourist in L.A.--all paid for ahead of time. That made the Russians think that we were communists, so they treated us exceedingly well and gave us extra passes. They killed us with kindness. This was mid-summer when it doesn't get dark in Russia until ten or eleven o'clock at night. Every night we were given tickets to the theater, to dance programs, or some entertainment, besides having done sight-seeing all day.

We did see their public housing, which wasn't very good, but there were miles of it. They were building huge blocks of apartments on the outskirts of Moscow. There would be four city blocks of them at about the same stage of construction, a kind of mass building operation that we had not done very much of in this country yet. They were poured concrete, ugly, plain, unpleasant in every way. When we would ask our guide what this section was called, she'd say, "I don't know. I haven't been here for a month." This got to be a joke. An enormous amount of public housing was going on, though there were very few completed buildings at that time.

We met very few tourists of any kind, about four Americans, a couple of Danes, a few Swedish people and that was about all. We were taken in private cars or buses to see what we wanted to see. We did manage to see the great collection of modern art. Everybody today says, "Oh, you couldn't have seen it." But we did. Both Mel and I knew, even at that time, that Russia owned some of the finest impressionist paintings, and

we insisted on seeing them. Finally, we were permitted to do so. It was then housed in an unimpressive private gallery--not the way it is in the Hermitage galleries today. There were marvelous paintings, some of which have since been circulated, but much of it has never been outside of Russia.

We found that we could do almost anything we wanted to do if we were insistent enough. Mel had a letter to the father of a prominent Russian woman doctor in Los Angeles, whom we wanted to visit to take him a memento from her. After a great deal of argument with the Intourist people, they permitted us to go by ourselves on the bus. That was an experience, because the Russian people were probably more curious about us than we were about them. They were fairly well clothed at that time, but had not seen clothes like ours.

There were long lines of people at the stores and shops because there was not yet enough consumer goods in Russia. One had to queue up and wait and wait to get a bus, or a streetcar, or to get into the subway, to get a theater ticket--to do anything. The Russians were very orderly, and we learned to queue up, too. It was hot summertime and both men and women wore slacks and a Russian blouse--the typical high-collared blouse that buttons down the side front. My clothes excited great interest on trains and in hotels--any place. I had simple cotton dresses, because it was exceedingly hot, but they were definitely more stylish than the Russian women had, and they were very interested in them. They would just stare at us.

We visited four cities: Kiev, Kharkov, Moscow, and Leningrad, and were always put on a night train. We really couldn't see very much of the countryside, except in the dim, midsummer light. As we got further north it was lighter and lighter; that is, the hours of darkness were fewer. We had to sleep on the trains, which didn't have what we call Pullman cars. In third class, as we were, there were wooden shelves that let down on a strap, and we were given thin, clean pads in sealed containers. You put that on the shelf and slept in your clothes. I would change into a long housecoat with a zipper down the front. Russian women had never seen zippers. I was a sensation each night!

We went from Leningrad to Finland. The train from Leningrad to the Finnish border was as dirty as all the others. We got to the border about midnight, got off that train, walked across the international line, and boarded a Finnish train, probably the greatest piece of contrast I ever experienced in my entire life. I suppose that the Finns did this on purpose. We got into a train that was all white birch and stainless steel. It was the most beautiful piece of railway sleeping car design that I have yet seen. We had a little roomette with linen sheets and woolen blankets and beautiful covers, elegant in every detail. In a way, the Finns were thumbing their noses at the Russians, and telling tourists how it could be, how it is in a capitalist country versus a communist country.

We were exhausted from so much activity in Russia. I remember we got to Helsinki and slept about twenty hours before we could crawl out and try to see the city. It is a very interesting city, and we were, of course, struck by the cleanliness of it, and the high quality of craftsmanship, the quality of workmanship in Russia being exceedingly poor and sloppy.

I went to see the architect, Alvar Aalto, in Helsinki. He already had a very great reputation in our country as an architect and as a furniture designer and I knew his work. I called and asked for permission to see his office and had a very pleasant interview with him. His own house and studio were interesting, full of bent-wood chairs, plus all kinds of experiments with wood lamination going on. Draftsmen were working in a part of the house. He asked me why I had come to see him when the greatest architects (referring particularly to Frank Lloyd Wright) in the world were in the United States. He wanted his ego rubbed a little bit, apparently, but he was a very nice man.

I talked to him about the very poor workmanship that we had observed in Russia, which he, of course, knew about. He had been imprisoned in Russia at one time because the borderline between Russia and Finland had changed and many of the border people had been imprisoned for one reason or another. He said that later the Russians had offered to make him the czar of housing in Russia. I asked why he hadn't taken such a wonderful opportunity.

He said it was because they had no building materials in Russia, no building materials and no craftsmanship, and that he would have spent his life just teaching them how to make good bricks. He said that Russia was a country of peasants with very few skills and that it would take many generations for Russians to acquire skills. He was quite content to remain in his own country, doing what he could do for his own country, and improving the quality of furniture design.

He had traveled around our country rather extensively including the San Francisco Bay Region. One of the things that fascinated him in Los Angeles markets were Mexican lacquered gourds. These were to him a folk art that he found enchanting. He thought many of our signs and much of our advertising was charming because it was novel to him and showed a playfulness and a vitality that he admired. At the same time, his own design was exceedingly clean and pure, and very fine.

After Helsinki, we went to Stockholm where the Conference of Housing and Town Planning was held. It lasted about three days, and was conducted in four languages. That was the first time that I had ever seen a simultaneous translating system, as it was quite new at that time.

I had had a letter to a landscape architect in Stockholm named Sven Linde, but before I had a chance to present my letter, I found myself sitting next to a very nice young man at the conference who obviously

knew English. We talked a bit at the end of one session, and I said that I was a landscape architect and that I had a letter to a Sven Linde. He identified himself as Sven Linde. This was, indeed, fortunate because we had already struck up an acquaintance. Swedish people are very formal and shy people, and Sven was particularly so. His wife was an American woman, a psychiatrist. We all became very good friends.

We stayed there in Stockholm for two weeks--ten days after the conference--in a very nice pension which was quite close to the Lindes'. Every morning, Phyllis Linde would call to ask how we were and what we would like to do that day. We saw a great deal more of Stockholm than we otherwise would have. We saw all of the good architecture, the good furniture designs and showings that were on. We saw the parks and landscaping work, and from Sven we had introductions to heads of the museums. Although museums were putting things away because the war was obviously coming very soon, we managed to see the cream of everything that was going on in the Stockholm area.

Swedish housing was of very much better design than any that we had seen anywhere in Europe, but there was not very much of it. It wasn't beginning to solve the housing problem yet. Housing costs were so high that people were doubling up with five to eight people living in apartments that had been designed for a family of three or four. But from a design standpoint, the housing was excellent. There were also some very well designed schools. We took pictures everywhere and I have books of pictures of the public housing in all of these countries, as well as slides.

At that time in Sweden the main work of landscape architects was cemetery design, innovative and impressive. They were involved with architects on projects, but not in charge of the site planning.

In Denmark, where we went next, we also had introductions to architects. In Denmark, the housing was even better than in Sweden, with more spaces between the buildings and some consideration given to the development of those spaces, with some playgrounds, and groves. Also, the schools that were incorporated in a total project were thought out in greater detail and were very much better.

From Denmark we went to England by crossing to Hull and back to London where we were when the British declared war. That was a very tense time. We had gone to Europe on a Belgian freighter and booked our return passage from Antwerp to New York City. We had to go back to Antwerp to get the freighter to New York. Nobody knew what to expect. Planes flew overhead, the city was blacked out, they were issuing gas masks to everybody, they evacuated the children.

We wanted to help, so we went to a peace group office and helped mail letters to conscientious objectors in London. We booked passage across the channel back to Antwerp, but no one could assure us that there

would be any crossings. We took the train to Dover, still not knowing whether we would get back to Antwerp or not. The bombings had started--the war was going on.

I will never forget that day. It was a most beautiful day in early September. We were allowed to get on a boat for the last channel crossing. Everybody of every nationality that was allowed to go back to the continent or get out of England was on that boat. It was overloaded. If anything had happened to it, we would have all gone down. The blockade was already running. We counted something like eighty boats already tied up in the channel.

We didn't know what would happen, even if we got across to Antwerp where we had left some of our things at a charming little hotel run by a mother and daughter, right by the port in Antwerp. We went back there on a blacked-out train, and the owners received us as though we were part of their own family. That was a very touching experience. They welcomed us just as though we were their children. They sent down to the basement for a bottle of old wine. We all sat in the dark, by candlelight, as they insisted on serving us their best wine.

The next morning we attempted to find out whether our freighter would sail or not and, as we were on our way to the American Express office, we saw a headline that really filled the paper. The first ship that was sunk in the North Sea out of England had been sunk that night. We knew that Mel's family would be terribly distressed and would surely think that we were on it because it was the last one sailing from England. Mel sent a one-word cable to his family with the word "safe." They couldn't assure us that they would send even that because the lines were jammed, but they would try.

They assured us that our ship would sail the next day, which it did. It was a freighter with an eight passenger capacity with eighteen on it, including the owner of the line and his wife. They were scared to death and never took off their clothes all the way to New York.

On the third morning out, we were at breakfast--we all sat at one table--when one of the crew came and whispered something in the captain's ear. His face went white as he left the table and motioned for the owner of the line to follow. Later they issued a bulletin saying that the sister ship had been sunk. It was about two hundred miles behind us, coming from the South Atlantic coast. It was a scary crossing, to be sure. We were very glad to see the Statue of Liberty in New York Harbor.





# XI LOS ANGELES, CITIZEN'S HOUSING COUNCIL, AND TELESIS

Having spent all of our money in Europe, we arrived in New York absolutely broke with no jobs. We decided to go to Washington, D.C., where Mel went to see the housing authorities about a job. After studying most of the public housing in Western Europe, Mel felt that he had something to offer. The flurry of war and the United States relationship to it was still not clear, however, and there were no jobs.

So we crossed the U.S.A. by Greyhound sleeper bus. We had travelled by bus or train all over Europe, but this country is so much bigger that it was an exhausting trip. Back in Los Angeles, Mel got a job in the public relations department of the State Relief Administration. We found a little place to live in Hollywood, a tiny house on a typical Hollywood lot, long and narrow with four houses only four feet apart, one behind the other. Ours was the third house back. There was less privacy than in most apartments.

Mel's job with the State Relief Administration was a highly political appointment under Governor Olson. After a few months the job was abolished, and Mel was out of a job again. He wasn't interested in it anyway, as we were just up to our ears in public housing. We felt that housing was going to be the answer to a lot of the world's urban problems. We could see that people would have to be educated before a public housing authority could be set up in Los Angeles.

So, Mel and I set up a citizen's housing council. We had to beg and borrow money while we gave our services and begged for a room. We called together architects (I didn't know of other landscape architects in Los Angeles) and all kinds of people that Mel knew in the area. I was not well informed. From Mel's contacts, we organized a citizen's group to promote public housing, that is, to get a law passed to set up a public housing authority. We had some important people on the board. Having been in public life and an editorial writer on a Hollywood paper, Mel knew everybody in the L.A. area that would be interested and brought them together.

There was a Catholic priest, Monsignor O'Dryer, on the board of directors as president one year. There were several architects from the larger offices, some social workers, planners, and industrial designers. Our small office was in an old building on Spring Street. Mel knew how to get publicity by holding meetings with important speakers, and writing good news releases. We worked up a very considerable amount of interest.

The organization was funded by memberships and begging and borrowing from everybody and giving our services. And we supported ourselves during that period by Mel's writing on the side. And I had a little nest egg from which we borrowed. It was just like the Depression days.

We were offered some money by one of the building trades, which was worrisome. We knew that they wanted the CHC to push a particular angle. The real estate lobby was the big enemy we had to fight. The money they offered was enough to finance the council for a year. Memberships alone are not enough to run a public organization.

We drove ourselves up to San Francisco in our awful car to see Miss Alice Griffith, a well-known activist in all kinds of public housing and welfare work in the San Francisco Bay area. She was a very wealthy woman who had given her whole life to public welfare of one sort or another. She knew exactly how to run organizations.

We asked Alice Griffith what we should do about this offer of money. She laughed and advised not to let it worry us, to always take all the money we could get without committing ourselves. "Take the money wherever you can get it, and spend it where you know it's needed. I have taken dirty money all my life. But don't commit yourself to anything. Just be very friendly with the people that give it to you and thank them, but don't put anything in writing." On her advice we accepted the money which helped us through that period, for printing and mailing pamphlets. We addressed hundreds and thousands of letters and notices of meetings by hand.

We put on Catherine Bauer as a speaker at one meeting. She was already rather famous from her book on housing. We invited her down from Berkeley and arranged for a big meeting in one of the high school auditoriums. We invited the heads of the labor council and many other organizations to sit on the stage. All of the big shots in Los Angeles with any interest in housing were there.

That day it hailed and rained harder than I had ever seen it rain in Los Angeles. Catherine Bauer was a rather important lady with a sense of her own importance. We met her at the train station, and when we went out to get into our car we realized the hail was going right through the cloth top of the car. She didn't seem to think it was funny. Mel and I thought it was very funny, but Catherine didn't think it was funny. She sat in the front seat holding an umbrella over herself, while I sat in the back and got pelted with hail.

We took her directly to the school auditorium. When it really rains hard like that in Los Angeles, nobody turns out. We had far more dignitaries sitting on the stage than people in the audience. It was a very sad affair. We had put on many successful lectures, but that one was dismal. Catherine delivered a fine address anyway. All the newspapers were there to cover the lecture, so it got very good coverage, although the audience was nil. The Citizen's Housing Council was fairly successful in its effort to get a housing authority for the City of Los Angeles.

It was on the trip up to see Alice Griffith that we learned about Telesis. We bumped into Fran Violich, who urged us to come see the exhibit they were preparing. The Telesis group in the San Francisco region was composed of architects, landscape architects, planners, people doing some housing studies, and some industrial designers who had gotten together a year before. They had picked up an old Greek word, Telesis, which means "progress intelligently planned."

After meeting for about a year, they decided that they would put on an exhibit if they could find a place to do it. Finally, they got a vacant building on lower Pacific Avenue in which to build the exhibit. The intent was to show what planning could do for cities. We went to see the exhibit while it was in preparation, and we were excited about what the group was doing, for it was an extension of what we had been seeing in Europe, much more than public housing. The exhibit included the planned neighborhoods concept. We resolved to start a similar group in the Los Angeles area. The Telesis exhibition was later installed in the San Francisco Museum.

Corwin Mocine, one of the group, said he might be coming to Los Angeles soon. We agreed that if he came down we would get a group of people together to learn about Telesis. He appeared on the following Friday, without any warning, to stay until Tuesday. If we could get a group together, he would talk to them on Monday night. By making a lot of phone calls, we brought together about forty people to hear Corwin on Monday night. That group was broader than the group up here. It included some social workers, photographers, industrial designers, artists, architects, and landscape architects.

The idea took like an inoculation. Everybody in that group was yearning to do something about the environment. We began meeting about once a week for lengthy planning bull sessions.

The Los Angeles group wanted to be a think tank, mulling over ideas. We all saw the flaws and the potential and got together to work on them. We wanted to pool our experience to try to think through better ways of planning for the future. After about nine months of meetings--we decided the only way to get our ideas across was to put on an exhibit.

The AIA in southern California was going to have its 10th annual exhibition at the Los Angeles County Museum. Some of the architects involved were also in Telesis. We outlined the exhibit, and Mel persuaded the Los Angeles County Museum director to let us install the show there in conjunction with the AIA show.

We divided up into work sections; a section on housing, one on recreation, one on transportation. A big battle ensued because Mr. Neutra, in his thorough German way, wanted to start the exhibition with the history of shelter from earliest times. Others argued that people would be worn out before they ever saw or got the point of what needed to be done to improve neighborhoods, which is what we in Telesis were trying to say.

Finally, Mel wrote an outline for the exhibit; he put it down in a clear form so there was something to talk about, to veto, add to, or subtract from. As a result, Mel was asked to write the catalogue for the exhibition.

The Telesis group in southern California had all of the important people from the housing council in it, plus other designers. Sometimes as many as a hundred people came to our meetings. When it came down to actually doing the work on the exhibit, there probably were about thirty fairly active people. The exhibit was divided by theme rooms, one for recreation, another for transportation, another for housing, and another for neighborhood development.

We all learned a great deal by working together. The county museum director would walk around through the rooms to praise or veto exhibits. There was a proposal to bring an actual slum house into the museum for contrast. That group did get a migratory housing shack, brought it in and set it up in the museum, a pretty revolutionary kind of thing to do in a county museum. The director was courageous and supportive.

Some of the exhibit techniques were outstanding. The exhibits were models, diagrams, drawings, photographs of good and bad things that had been done in other parts of the world--some already existed and some were futuristic. Several people in Telesis had movie animation skills which they applied to miniature peep show exhibits, and blow-ups that represented transportation possibilities for the future, better work spaces, better living spaces, better transportation systems, and better neighborhood development. The quality of the whole exhibition was quite high; it was the work of the top industrial designers in the Los Angeles area at that time.

Where we got the money for materials, I don't recall. Tremendous enthusiasm kept us working day after day, in spite of heated arguments between various professional designers. The exhibit opened on time, just about a month before war was declared and the museum was closed. All museums were closed and that was the end of our big effort.

The war stopped all kinds of public activity. Everyone was immediately plunged into war work. Many of the Telesis members were drafted. Most were young people, and each one had to go his own way. Telesis fell apart.

The exhibition was only open for a month, but in that time it did a great deal. As a result of that, Mel was asked to write two books on Los Angeles. The kinds of things that come out of an effort like that are not just the number of people who see it but what is prompted to develop later--effects that aren't immediately apparent. All of us who went through the group discussions and building the exhibit learned so much and it affected our thinking from then on. Many of us became professors and taught what we learned. That was the most educational experience that any of us had ever had. [See Appendices for "Telesis Notes" by G.S. Scott]



## XII

## WORLD WAR II YEARS, LOS ANGELES, AND SAN JOSE

Scott: War housing got under way. The first housing project was in Long Beach, designed by Eugene Weston, one of the architects that had been in our Telesis group. Neutra designed another big housing project in that area. Weston asked me to do the landscape work on the one in Long Beach. Not much landscape design was possible because so much was proscribed by the Washington office, such as the width of a walk, the amount of laundry space, the amount of play space. Everything was rigid, and the cost factors were insufficient. It wasn't a real site design project but I was the landscape architect and did specify all that was installed, including one tree per unit.

By working through that project I learned how inadequate and sad the war housing regulations were, producing results worse than many housing projects we had seen in Europe. After all the public housing that had been built in Europe, to have our housing law set up with such rigid design regulations was very disheartening.

I was urged to apply for a job in the Los Angeles County Planning Office by Werner Ruckti, the head, and Si Eisner, Tom Cook, and several other people that had been in the Telesis group from that agency. Many of the county office draftsmen had been drafted and had to be replaced. The application called for men only, but there were no men available. They were losing their staff and yet there were mandatory regulations to produce certain studies and reports. After a great deal of debate, Werner Ruckti decided to take me on a provisional basis until the civil service examinations would be held. So I went to work in the L.A. County Regional Planning Office.

There was much discussion about having a woman in the drafting room. It was revolutionary. They argued that the fellows worked in their shirt sleeves; it just wouldn't do to

have a woman draftsman. (Men would be crazy not to work in their shirt sleeves. I too worked in my shirt sleeves because it's hot in Los Angeles.) Finally they decided to try me out. Big concession! The most revolutionary thing I did was to make them open the windows! The air in the drafting room from smoke and sweat was foul.

My first assignment was to visit all the schools in Los Angeles County to find out how big their sites were, what portion of the site was set aside for recreation, and what recreation facilities they had, if any. In other words, an inventory had to be made. At that time, the Los Angeles County Planning Office had none of that kind of information. I often had to measure the entire school grounds because there wasn't even a plot plan of the school.

We developed a fine school recreation questionnaire for principals or superintendents. Their answers were usually, "I don't know." To get the necessary data, I had to look up the tax records for the size of each site plot and search through records at the Board of Education.

One of the things we had learned in the Telesis group was that at that time data records were almost nonexistent. This lack of records shows how recent planning is. There were census tracts but census tracts didn't correspond with other boundary lines, county lines, neighborhood lines, or utility district lines. They didn't coordinate with the telephone company maps or water company maps. Every agency office was working at a different scale. It was chaos. A lot of the LARPA's time was spent trying to bring these data sheets to the same scale in order to make more accurate comparisons. Making overlays was really what the planning office was mostly engaged in, just that sort of basic work.

Buktenica: There were no records of buildings or plot plans?

Scott: Sometimes yes, with no scale indicated and none to be found. Also, at that time, the kind of reproduction processes that we have today didn't exist. A lot of office staff time went into these mechanics, hardly any planning at all. However, it was an interesting job for me.

When it came time to take the qualifying examination, the fellows in the office were terribly nice. They all coached me privately. It was like my boy cousins all doing things for me in private, but publicly they were often against me. I was a token woman, but they accepted me privately. The exam was really very simple. I passed with a higher rating than the two men who also took the exam. I continued in that office, having



then earned the job legitimately, and forced them to allow women to apply for all future civil service jobs.

Through searching tax records, I became aware of delinquent properties. It then looked as though we were going to live in Los Angeles for the rest of our lives, so I investigated a few of these delinquent tax properties. I found a really handsome piece of property, hard to get to, and a hard site to build on, but it had a great deal of charm and potential. It was near Mulholland Drive, not that high, but up in the hills overlooking the Hollywood Freeway. The freeway was right below, but it was then a rather small roadway.

We acquired that piece of property, about 3/5 of an acre, for around \$300; that is, the delinquent taxes. We went ahead planning to build on that stepped-down site. We went up every weekend to work on the oak trees, clearing out dead branches and brush. We decided where we would locate the house and asked Earl Webster, husband of my old friend Honor Easton, to design it for us. I had designed a few gardens for architects, Earl Webster and Sumner Spaulding and others. Working with Earl, I sited the house. I was excited about the prospect of having a home of my own.

In the meantime, Mel had finished the book, Cities Are For People; ["The Los Angeles Area Plans for Living," designed by Alvin Lustig with drawings by Bob Holdeman, Los Angeles, 1942] and was working for the L.A. County Housing Authority as a public relations writer. He stayed in that job for some months, hating it because his boss was obviously racist. The housing that the county was developing was mainly for Spanish-American and black people. The director, Mel's boss, was really a horrible person. As the projects were nearing completion, Mel became very tense and dreaded going to the office. The rental policy for occupancy was clearly discriminatory which caused a public scandal. Soon that office was closed or consolidated to get rid of the director and Mel was out of a job again.

Buktenica: You speak of a planning department and a housing office, but that there was no real planning profession at that time. You also mentioned Si Eisner, who was later the head of the USC planning school. What was his background? At that time, where did he come from?

Scott: Most of the people in planning came out of landscape architecture, but Si didn't. Si came out of a combination of architecture and social welfare, I think.

Buktenica: He was one of the first planners?

Scott: In the south, yes.

Buktenica: It wasn't a planning profession yet?

Scott: Mel's book on planning, History of American City Planning, will give you the answer to your question. There were planning offices, there was some planning legislation, but the planning being done was largely the coordination of mapping and the developing of standards.

One of the things that was accomplished in that L.A. office was to persuade real estate developers to improve their subdivisions. To get a permit, they had to submit a plan, but usually the plans submitted were mere sketches, not developed plans. Developers usually didn't have any staff or any knowledge of planning or planning principles, so the RPD would actually design the subdivision for them. Often streets or utilities had already been located, so only minor modifications and improvements could be made. This was about the extent of planning in Los Angeles in the forties--minor improvements in subdivisions and street alignments.

We in Telesis yearned to make comprehensive plans, but public support wasn't ready yet. We didn't have support, money, or staff. We were bucking a potent real estate lobby that didn't want anything changed. Trying to get a developer to leave a school site in a subdivision was heresy. Also undergrounding of utilities or differentiating through streets from side streets and satellite streets, was heresy. It was much simpler to plot as many lots as possible and make uniform streets, which makes more money for the subdivider. Any deviation meant a loss of profit or potential income for them. Although there was a subdivision ordinance, the real estate lobby fought planning in devious ways. The first planning ordinance was passed in California in 1922, but the requirements were minimal.

While Mel was unemployed that summer, we decided to take a vacation and came up and spent two weeks at Stinson Beach in a friend's house, trying to decide what Mel should try next. Back in Los Angeles, Mel was asked to do some more work for the Haynes Foundation on another, bigger book. Cities Are For People had been written for high school use, and this was to be for concerned citizens. It was called Metropolitan Los Angeles (1949, Haynes Foundation).

Before it was completed, Mel was offered a job with the National Resources Planning Board, which had its office here in

the Berkeley Post Office. That offer came at the very time we were to let the contract to build our house. What a dilemma! Just as Mel was about to phone the contractor to say we would accept the lowest bid (which was about \$6,500, omitting the one big room), a call came from Van Buren Stanberry, the head of the NRPB office in Berkeley, asking Mel if he would care to work for the National Resources Planning Board.

We were pretty well settled in L.A.; I had a job and we were about to build a house. Although I hated Los Angeles, it did look as if we were going to have a home at last. Since I had never had even a room of my own, that was a very hard decision to make. I also had more contacts for landscape work, so things were opening up for me in L.A. However, we decided to move to Berkeley.

Mel started right to work for the National Resources Planning Board. That office included Jack Kent and two or three other people who later became important in the field of planning. Stanberry, the head of NRPB was a famous demographer, a brilliant and interesting man. He put together the information that was being gathered by the NRPB field offices in Denver and various parts of the country.

The NRPB was looking at all kinds of resources and planning for the future. Stanberry had one of those fine, synthesizing minds that looks at all the statistical information and sees a trend which he would try to put together in a simple report. Mel was his rewrite man. Stanberry would modify and change whole sections to give each subject the exact emphasis he wanted to give it. It was wonderful training for Mel, though tiring to work on a ninth rewrite.

I had lost my landscape contacts in L.A. and didn't have many in Berkeley. It was a tough time for me. We found a nice place to live through an old friend of Miss O'Hara's. She had just built four units designed by Clifford Conley on Prospect Street. The rent was much more than we could afford, but the gardens hadn't yet been developed. Katey Smithwild owned two double units with a garden space in between. She lowered our rent in return for landscaping. I not only designed the gardens, but bought the plants, planted them, designed screen fences, and trained vines. At least that gave me something to do. It was my first experience with the heavy soil in Berkeley.

Mel had had to start work immediately, so I had to do the moving while still working at the regional planning office. It was so strenuous that I had some kind of a seizure soon after I got to Berkeley. We never knew whether it was a kind of mild

heart attack, or just what it was, but it put me in bed for several weeks and it took quite a while to completely recover.

It was still war time. There were no landscape jobs and it was a discouraging time for me, but it was a great experience for Mel. (I did take a government course in camouflage directed by Professor Vaughan.)

The National Resources Planning Board was killed by an act of Congress in 1943. They went so far as to impound for twenty years all the work that had been done. The Berkeley office had a grand party, a wake, for which Mel wrote a fine dirge, putting all of the reports in a casket and burning them. Mel had copies of those he had written, but officially the reports were destroyed. Thus ended the Berkeley office of National Resources Planning Board.

That event meant that Mel had lost a state job, a county job, and now a federal job, and the war was still on. Although jobs were very scarce, Mel had several offers. One was from the City of San Jose where a very liberal Congregational minister had organized a group to study its growth problems toward improving the city. Mel took the job as director of a citizen's planning council for San Jose.

Moving to San Jose was like going to the Middle West. It was as conservative and unsophisticated as a town in Iowa or Indiana. After living in Los Angeles and San Francisco we found most people unaware of what was going on in the state or the nation. Politically, they were mostly reactionaries scared to death of public housing which was a radical idea to them. They did take great pride in their city's history as the first non-military town in California.

Buktenica: The San Jose area was primarily agricultural then, wasn't it?

Scott: It was always an agriculturally oriented community. The city was ill-defined, already starting to spread out into agricultural land. Mel was given a very small budget and an unfurnished room upstairs in the Civic Auditorium for an office. Again, just like organizing the Los Angeles housing council, we had to start from scratch. Mel is very good at organizing. He located interested people and called groups together to work on welfare, real estate, housing, recreation, education--all citizen committees. Each group tried to set goals for post-war development. I helped Mel furnish his office, but I could see that the city fathers were too conservative to accept a woman in a more active role.

Wanting to do something for the war effort, and learning about a job in Sunnyvale making computations on the data collected from testing of planes in the wind tunnels, I took the exam, qualified, and was ready to take the job, as boring as it seemed, when I learned inadvertently that I would get exactly two-thirds of the salary of the man who had been doing the job before. When I asked about that discrepancy, it was because I was a woman. My response was that war or no war, I was not going to do the same amount of work for two-thirds the salary. I found no other job.

Many older people who weren't involved in the war effort took classes in adult education. San Jose had a good adult education program at that time, directed by Mr. McKaye, a very good educator. I enrolled in two or three classes in appreciation of music, and one in current events, given by teachers who were brilliant, wonderful people. They were the first people that I had met in San Jose who had active minds.

After a short time, Mr. McKaye asked me if I didn't want to give a course in planning, teaching what Mel was doing at the city level. I worked up a course, and although I didn't have a teacher's credential, I got a provisional one easily with my education and background. For three-and-a-half of the five years we lived in San Jose, I taught a series of classes in community planning under the adult education program.

I tried various approaches to the large subject. I began with planning a room for work or play, how to arrange work spaces, and progressed to house planning, planning a neighborhood, and then planning a community. The kinds of people that came there couldn't grasp big concepts, so I led them step-by-step.

As the war was drawing to a close, we all knew that as soon as the war ended there would be a great burst of planning and building. There were many people who wanted to build houses who came to my courses. Each class attracted more people than the one before.

Mel and I both felt that a planning exhibit was needed in San Jose. We knew the few architects who were in town who hadn't gone to war, pulled them in, plus all people with any talent, and together we put on a planning exhibit. It was a minor Telesis exhibit, which didn't go beyond the planning of a neighborhood.

For the exhibit, we were given two downstairs rooms in the Civic Auditorium, long, narrow rooms which made circulation difficult. We designed a subdivision for a raw piece of land,

leading the group through the whole design process, including the making of a model and photographs of the model and the undeveloped land. The process was educational and the exhibit got good publicity and was well attended.

Through the exhibit I renewed acquaintance with Chester Root, an architect who had been at UCB with me. He and Bill Higgins had their offices in San Jose. Their draftsmen had gone to war, so Chet Root invited me to come in and do drafting for them. As I had never done architectural drafting, Higgins and Root agreed to teach me. Bill was really an engineer, and Chet the architect in an office with four draftsmen. They were beginning to design houses to be built as soon as materials were available. I started work in their Spring Street office.

One incident will demonstrate how unsophisticated the people were in San Jose. One day at a businessmen's lunch club meeting, Mel met a casual acquaintance, a man who was the manager of the biggest bank in San Jose. This man had seen me in the office of Higgins & Root with a smock on and was so startled and flabbergasted that he backed out the door. Mel was asked, "How'd you ever get connected with a lady drawer?" He didn't know what to call me. San Jose was the most provincial place I have ever lived.

Bill Higgins was a very good teacher, very exact, and a good draftsman himself. I did what he assigned, made a print of my tracing (they had their own printing machine), then Bill would mark the print and make me correct my tracing until I really mastered the technique of making clear working drawings. This process proved useful to me later.

Also at that time when I was doing very little, Fred Shipp, head of San Jose High School, asked me to explore some of his school planning problems. The planning had been inadequate before the war and he wanted to be prepared for the tremendous influx of students after the war when the school board would have to make quick decisions. He asked me how site planners go about this kind of problem.

I didn't know about school planning but I did start studying the San Jose High School site curriculum and recreation needs and making various proposals. It was a project without pay, but something to occupy my mind. Nothing came of that directly, but I learned much in the process.

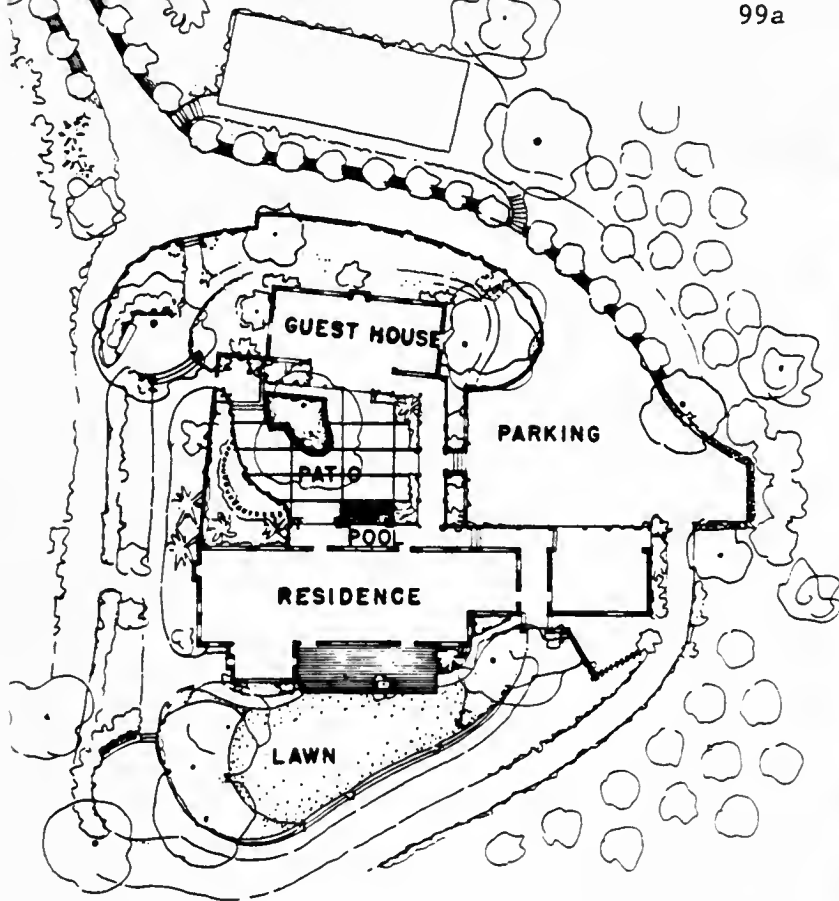
Finally, the San Jose Planning Council couldn't raise any more money, so Mel's job was in jeopardy again. San Jose was a very cliquy place and because certain people were in charge of particular committees, other people wouldn't cooperate. We

learned that when you come into a new community, it's pretty difficult to find out who is who, that if you attract one, you alienate another. Mel could see that he had been financed by the wrong clique, and that very little would come of his efforts. The people that had political clout were in another camp. They wouldn't support proposals that came from a group of what they called "radicals."

The citizens for Mel's committees were anything but radical, but they were too liberal for the politicians in power. The controlling clique was and still is, or it was up to a few years ago, Food Machinery Corporation, a unique organization that started in San Jose making food processing machinery. It grew enormously during the war, making water buffalos, an amphibian tank, which they shipped all over the world. They became exceedingly prosperous and proliferated into more plants. The head of Food Machinery Corporation was the head of one of Mel's planning councils, but it became clear that the support of FMC was a kind of window-dressing; they looked as though they believed in planning but they really did not. The planning council was phased out.

It was discouraging, and San Jose was a depressing place to live, so we decided to give ourselves a trip to Mexico. Mr. McKaye asked us to take pictures for his adult education classes. His advance payment made it possible for us to go on to Guatemala for another month. Our slides of Mexico and Guatemala were very good. We each gave several paid lectures to large audiences after that trip.

After our trip, Paul Hanna of Stanford asked Mel to go to New York to write for a textbook organization called Building America, a very liberal publication producing material to be put into the schools after the war. Mel was not supposed to say, and I was not supposed to tell, what he was doing. As my brother said, "I wouldn't tell anybody either if I was at work writing for 'The Watchtower.'" He went to New York and worked very hard for three months at what was a high-paid position, but living costs were so high there was no profit in the job.



Architect  
 Landscape Architect  
 Photographer  
 Owner

Stedmon-Libbey-Gray  
 Scott & Imlay  
 Philip Fein (above)  
 Mason Weymouth (other)  
 E. J. Nell



## XIII

## MY OWN OFFICE, 1946; PALO ALTO, 1947-1952

Scott:

While Mel was in New York, I was still working for Higgins and Root, who were designing townhouses on fairly large lots. I found myself planning the space around the house, designing the garden, doing the working drawings, in other words, the whole landscape plan. It didn't make sense to be working for Higgins and Root as a draftsman while giving landscape architectural services. I located office space and opened my own office before Mel returned.

Chet realized it was time for me to be on my own. I also knew several other architects, so there was plenty of work. I had become pretty well-known, had already built a clientele through my classes in community planning teaching adult education in San Jose, and by giving talks to women's and men's service clubs--the "B" Circuit we called it.

When Mel came back, there were more revisions to be made on the Los Angeles book for another edition. In the meantime, Jack Kent, who had gone from the National Resources Planning Board to Europe and then into the service, on returning was made head of the San Francisco Planning Department, the youngest planning director in the United States. That planning office wanted to make a study of the Western Addition, so Jack Kent asked Mel to come to San Francisco and make it, but living in San Jose while commuting to San Francisco was well-nigh impossible.

There was a train service but the schedules didn't work for commuting. Once again we had to face the problem of meshing two careers. The only thing to do was to move out of San Jose, and yet I had a clientele and a promising landscape practice. Moving to San Francisco wasn't a solution because there was no housing to be had anywhere in the whole San Francisco Bay Region. War industries in and around San Francisco had filled all the existing housing. Palo Alto seemed like the best compromise. From there Mel could commute

to San Francisco, and I could work all over the south peninsula and keep my contacts in the San Jose area.

I went to Palo Alto to look for housing. There was absolutely nothing, so I advertised to remodel, rebuild, or house sit. I got only three answers. One of them was a barn on Palo Alto Avenue. It had the most space but looked impossible for many reasons, primarily the odor. It had not only been a barn, but had also been used by a veterinarian as a stable for large and small animals. There was also an unvented toilet under a stairway. The animal odors, plus the unvented toilet, plus termite odor, made a horrible combination.

In order to get a house and office, we had to lease this large property. The owner had stored a lot of junk up in the loft of the barn, but hadn't touched the lower part of it. I took Chet and several other architects to see the barn. They all agreed that we would never get rid of the smell. But we had to have a place to live and work, and we had to get out of San Jose. I was desperate. The owner worked for IBM, had a mind like a computer, and was a very strange man. Mr. Perkins -- "Pa Perkins," as we later called him -- finally came to terms on a remodelling program.

I drew the plans, having learned how in Chet and Bill's office. Most of the barn -- not all of it, but most of it -- was sealed with tung and groove boarding. The whole straightway through the barn was sealed with heavily varnished T & G, ugly as could be. I figured I could remove those boards and replace them with plaster board or some other surfacing, which would give me some useful material and perhaps that would get rid of the smell.

There were no carpenters yet back from war, no materials available, everything was still allocated. When I started hunting for carpenters I learned about some Seventh-Day Adventist carpenters living in Mountain View. They were conscientious objectors who never went to war, not the greatest carpenters in the world, but the only people available. I located one old man and a couple of younger fellows who came and looked at the barn. The old man said that he could get rid of the smell with Clorox, air and sunlight. That gave me confidence, although Chet, Kress, Gibson and a few others kidded the life out of me.

In the meantime, we had to move to Palo Alto to facilitate Mel's commute. We learned about a couple who were being transferred from Palo Alto to Modesto. Their house was in that tract right next to Middlefield Road in south Palo Alto, in a group of little Spanish-style stucco houses, as ugly as can be.

We managed to move in for the summertime, and stay there the three months necessary to rebuild the barn. Fortunately, it was summertime because the barn had to be opened up. I signed up the carpenters and we started to work.

I had to sign up at some kind of a federal office to get every tool or plank I bought and show the plans to prove that I needed every item. I measured, surveyed and made all the working drawings. The barn floor sloped five inches from front to back, so we had to raise it to put a new footing under three perimeter walls. It proved to be much more of a job than I anticipated. It was full of termites and had every problem in the book. We put in five or six thousand dollars on a pre-paid lease for home and office and Pa Perkins put in, not an equal amount, but some money. Of course, it was his equity that we created for him because the barn was useless as it was.

On one side there was an earth floor with stalls for horses; the other side was divided into small animal cages. We removed partitions and an inside stairway to the loft so that Mr. Perkins would not have access through our house or office space. The completed remodelling of the ground floor was spacious enough for home and office and had considerable charm.

My practice in San Jose had increased so much that I needed assistance. Professor Vaughan suggested Katherine Imlay, who had received her degree from UCB during the war period and was living in Saratoga. Katy had had a varied background in merchandising of clothes and was a natural designer. She had studied art at Black Mountain College with Josef Albers before she came on to Berkeley to get her degree in landscape architecture. She was older than most of the students, naturally.

Working for me was Katy's first experience in a landscape office. Although her sketches had style, she was not disciplined and drafting was very difficult for her. She had not observed how materials are put together, had very little concept of construction even after her education at Cal.

For me, building construction is a logical process, clarified by the courses I had taken in architectural construction at Cornell. I was surprised to learn that Katy had never observed how things were constructed, had no clear idea of how to join two pieces of wood. I have always been interested in construction. It fascinated me.

While I was in high school the Southern Pacific Building on lower Market Street in San Francisco was under construction. I often went down to watch the driving of piles.

It took months to put down a sufficient base for that building. I was the only female watching the pile driver, driving one pile on top of another. The piles just disappeared into the filled land, formerly the bay.

When I was in Paris in 1930, the bridge across the Seine from Place de la Concorde was being widened. France has marvelous building material. Caen stone, which comes from Brittany, was used for most of the great cathedrals and bridges. As I passed the construction site one day, I saw that they were loading the caissons around the piers with Caen stone, dumping in large, rough blocks of this fine stone. Just one block would be worth a fortune in this country.

I was so shocked by such waste that the next day I went to watch this performance again. And again, I was the only female present. French men were perplexed and asked what I was doing there. My French had improved but they used words new to me. It took a while to understand the burden of their song: Each one thought I was about to commit suicide and resolved to prevent me from jumping into the river or jumping into the caissons to go down with the blocks of Caen stone. When I expressed my concern over the waste of such fine stone, they could only shrug their shoulders and pass me off as crazy!

As soon as materials were available after the war, many clients wanted fences or screens built for privacy. To help Katy and to show our clients, we made models of garden fences out of balsa wood. Katy's creativity produced lovely little models. She studied the effects produced by various spacings of the vertical and horizontal members, with results similar to Japanese fences, not copied, but a natural result of playing with wood.

Our office was on North Spring Street over a clothing store. It was not a very good neighborhood at that time. There were often a few drunks hanging around the parking area but since clients seldom come to a landscape architect's office, it was okay.

The first school job was for Alum Rock District on the east side of San Jose. For five years there had been no school building and many people had moved into the area. Small districts, with one five-room school, suddenly were confronted with putting a thousand children into classrooms. New school buildings were being planned in every district. Architects and landscape architects were in great demand.

There was a Division of School Planning in Sacramento to administer the school building code. Also, a law had been

passed to partially equalize the unequal tax distribution between school districts in California.

Buktenica: San Jose must have been one of the forerunners in post-war school building.

Scott: San Jose had grown because of the Food Machinery Corporation, and other ordinance plants located in Santa Clara County.

From my study of the high school problem earlier, I was prepared to make a study of Alum Rock School District. The report that I made was later presented to Dr. Bursh, the head of the Division of School Planning, who called me up to Sacramento. I was sort of put on the carpet. Who was I, a landscape architect, to make a report on the needs of a school district? That was an architect's job!

Dr. Bursh finally conceded that it was a thorough report. The architect for that job was Ernest Kump, who made another report, largely based on mine. I did, however, make the site plan for that first school, urging acquisition of more land to not only take care of additional classrooms but additional play areas.

Alum Rock was a grammar school district with a five-member board composed of farmers, or orchardists, and a dentist, probably the only man with a college education on the board. Board meetings often lasted for many hours, until twelve or one a.m. That first board had been elected soon after the first small school was built, and had existed for a long time without ever handling any building or design problems. Teacher's salaries and vocational programs were their chief concerns. Suddenly they were presented with a building program that was going to run over a million dollars. One of the members resigned, leaving a vacancy which I suggested they fill with a woman. The men said, "Oh, hell! We don't want a woman on the board. What would we do with a woman on the board? We couldn't smoke or do anything."

Incidentally, I should say that these men used to put a spittoon in front of them and use it while I was present. Several chewed tobacco or smoked, and they were pretty rough in their speech. I was in no position to protest. They never cleaned up their speech for me. So when they protested that they couldn't have a woman on the board, I said, "Well, I'm a woman and I'm here. It hasn't seemed to inhibit you in any way. One of them spoke right up and said, "Oh, hell, we don't think of you as a woman. You are just one of the boys." Well!

Jack: Ha! How did that sit with you?

Scott: I just blinked and laughed. We all laughed together and went on with the meeting. The dentist told his wife what was said and she insisted that he call me up to apologize. About five minutes to eight the next morning, there was a phone call from this dentist saying that his wife said he must apologize for what he had said the night before. I replied that I took his remark to mean that I was accepted by the board as a professional landscape architect and thanked him for his apology.

That incident was pretty typical of the macho attitude that existed at that time. That board got pretty rough at times. They had big arguments. One night they went out to smoke, got into a fist fight, and knocked one member flat.

Buktenica: Did they bring a woman on the board?

Scott: No. Another man was appointed to fill the vacancy until an election was held.

Buktenica: What size site were you proposing?

Scott: About ten acres, I think.

Buktenica: That was the beginning of the approximately ten-acre elementary school site?

Scott: Standards for school sites were still being formulated. That board got more excited over the issue of gang showers for girls as proposed by Mr. Kump, the architect.

Buktenica: As opposed to private stalls?

Scott: Right. They were called gang showers. The board got so heated over this discussion that it went on for many hours. This was a grammar school of first to eighth grades, not one to six. Fathers didn't want their early teenage girls exposed to--I don't know what. A Victorian attitude, new to me.

I wondered how they would react to the landscape plan when I brought it in. I had been attending meetings for weeks before my plans were ready. When I did present my plan, they simply accepted it without comment or question. It was very disappointing because I had sat with them all through their meetings on the building, but when I explained what I thought was appropriate, the play fields that were needed, their whole reaction was, "Well, it looks very pretty." Site planning was outside of their experience. They had confidence in me.

Because of that job, I was later called into East Side Union School District, a high school district which adjoined the grammar school district but was administered separately and had a more sophisticated school board. I got that job because there was a very well-educated man, Mr. McCallum, an agronomist on that board. Harry Shepherd from UCB had recommended me to Mr. McCallum, who invited me to come to his office.

Mr. McCallum was in effect a farm advisor for a part of Santa Clara County. After talking with me, he decided I was capable and the board accepted me. There was no contest since nobody else made a proposal. Kress and Gibson of Palo Alto were the architects for that school. By that time, Stanford had a Department of Education under which a Professor McConnell had introduced a school plant planning course. They put on seminars, two or three summer sessions. I participated in several of them.

As soon as we moved the office to Palo Alto, I had to get more draftsmen. Katy wasn't a good draftsman, and neither was she interested in school planning. Katy was only interested in the design of private gardens and designed several charming ones. But I had to employ good draftsmen to turn out the big school plans with written specifications. Small garden jobs didn't go to bid. You designed a garden, found a contractor who made an estimate, and you presented the estimate to your client for acceptance.

Buktenica: Was this true for the whole nation?

Scott: Oh, no, this was only true in California. We did not have any licensed landscape contractors until 1937. The licensing law was revised and made more inclusive in 1948.

California has always been different in many ways, which is one reason that the ASLA did not understand our problems. In working for a school district, a public body, I had to learn the whole process of writing bid proposals, advertising for bids, and going through the complete bidding procedure. Chester Root coached me, since architects had been required to follow that procedure for years.

Eastside Union had acquired a site of about twenty acres, a little small for the football field and running track, and other play fields. The site was so tight that the orientation of the play fields, which I established, determined everything else. I was absolutely adamant that they be properly oriented. The site was too tight for any maneuvering, there was no wasted space.

I soon became identified with setting recreational standards which I had studied thoroughly, insisting that play fields be properly oriented. I interviewed the coach at Stanford and various high school sports people in order to plan a running track and football field. Recreation experts had made presentations at the school plant planning sessions at Stanford. I learned a great deal from those seminars which enabled me to handle large school projects.

It was pretty tough for a woman to design and supervise the building of a running track, believe me. The lack of good local aggregates from which to make a well-drained base complicates the construction of a track. California does not have very much of this kind of material. In the East, running tracks were built up of layers of cinders. There is too much clay in this area even in our so-called red rock.

What we had to do was put down a clay base, a hard-rolled base and then use something called Palco wool, shredded redwood bark, evenly spread to form a springy mattress that would drain well right down to the clay base. Neither I nor the contractor had ever specified such a process or seen it done. Manufacturer's specs were not clear. O.C. Jones got that contract and I stayed on the job day after day to prevent them from putting the Palco wool down in chunks rather than in even layers. Palco wool was a new, tough material to handle.

My classmate, Art Cobbledick, was also interested in school work, so we formed an association called Landscape Architects Associated--this was mainly Art Cobbledick and Geraldine Knight Scott. We put out a brochure and sent it to new districts, explaining what landscape architects services were, and our qualifications. Schools offered big site planning opportunities that we were eager to work on.

Art Cobbledick's office was just across the creek from our office, so it was quite easy for us to collaborate on a number of projects. Sometime the drafting was done in his office and sometimes in mine.

The first person who came to work for us was Muz Kimura, also a UCB graduate, just back from the war, and looking for a job. When he came to see us, I realized that it would not be easy for a Japanese man to work for two women. I made the same proposal to him that Miss O'Hara had made to me years ago. I said, "Muz, if you find it difficult to work for us at any time, just feel free to leave." He just smiled that that was fine. Muz worked for us for about a year and a half, a good draftsman, always pleasant.



Suddenly he disappeared without explanation. His brother called us, for Muz had really disappeared. I learned that Muz had been with that group of Japanese who had volunteered for the war and been sent to Italy. All but five of that regiment were killed. From this experience, Muz began to develop a guilt complex.

It was not that he could not work for Katy and me but because Muz was grieving over his war experience that he had left. He felt that he had been saved from death because he had a college education and had been put in an office handling reports and orders for his regiment, not ever in the front lines. This began to prey on his mind. Later, he came to me quite late one night when Mel was away. Muz was quite drunk, but he sat and told me all this which seemed to relieve him considerably. He worked for me only a short time after that. By then he felt ready to go his own way.

Years later, after I moved to Berkeley, I had a phone call from Muz. He had been to Hawaii. Most of the people in this Japanese regiment had been Hawaiian-Japanese, and the other four who were spared were Hawaiian-Japanese. They had invited Muz over for a reunion. They had all suffered through this same kind of guilt complex, but had recovered as a group. Getting together with them seemed to have done Muz a tremendous amount of good. He wanted to come see me. He came bringing a great bunch of caladiums from Hawaii, a nice end to this episode. I have seen Muz only a few times since. He has, I think, developed a successful practice. Muz is built like a Japanese wrestler, but he is a very sensitive person and does very sensitive design in the Japanese manner.

The next people that came to work for me were John Adams and Casey Kawamoto, both recent Cal graduates. Casey was a marvelous draftsman, with degrees in architecture and landscape architecture. I think it would not have been possible to turn out some of the school project drawings without Casey. He and John Adams had been pals at UC Berkeley.

John Adams was very shy and not a very good draftsman. He didn't stay very long, only until he took the examinations with the National Park Service where he now has a high rank in the western office. He was basically not a designer. I think he has been very happy in the National Park system. There were a number of other draftsmen during that period. We often had three.

Buktenica: What other kinds of work did you get?

Scott: The Oakland Garden Show and San Mateo County garden shows, which had existed before the war, hadn't been very extensively developed. After the war there was a great burst of interest in plants, gardens, and design. All of the state and county fairs flourished. We were anxious to show our skills, so most landscape architects participated. There were some very interesting exhibits.

Today landscape architects seem to feel superior to participating in such shows. At that time, everybody got in the act planning exhibits and competing, and were glad to win prizes. Sculptors, artists, architects and landscape architects worked together to produce some beautiful pieces of design. The garden shows were fun because we not only designed but installed them right away, having the pleasure of accomplishment. Also there was a nice spirit of rivalry between the various landscape architects. Each thought his design was the best, naturally.

Landscape materials were in short supply. New, untried materials were coming on the market. We also scrounged through places like Simon Brothers Wrecking Company in San Francisco and the machinery yards for any kind of material that we might use. There was lots of ingenuity displayed. We were all bursting with desire to create.

I think the most fun that Katy and I ever had was getting materials out of a marine salvage yard in San Jose. It was a very big company where we found wonderful gears and all kinds of things which we incorporated in pavements and fountains. It was there that we found beautiful soft pink and blue pebbles--a great mountain of pebbles that were washed smooth--about the size of eggs. They had been transported from Norway in the hold of the ship as ballast. The pebbles had been dumped in this yard years before. None had been sold. We decided to invest. We bought twenty-eight dollars worth of those pebbles and had them delivered to the corporation yard of our office in Palo Alto. We segregated them by size and color, using them in exhibits, in pavements, or around the barn foundation and over small plots as mulch.

Another great find was accidental. For one exhibit I wanted some sheets of plastic. Plastics had come in during the war, not yet common, but war surplus stores advertised many kinds. We went to many sales to see what might be useful in garden design. I returned from a sale in San Mateo telling Mel I had bought one hundred oars! He thought I was absolutely crazy. The oars, lifeboat oars, were hand-hewn with beautiful shanks and handles, mostly made of oak, fourteen feet long.

The blades alone were about four and half feet. All were painted battleship grey.

What fun we had with that batch of oars! The barn became known as "the oar house" because we used them to make the stair railing in front, another example of the ingenious use of materials. We enjoyed that period experimenting with new materials.

In designing the garden for the barn, which sat in the middle of a large plot with a wall around it, we used new materials and new ideas. On the east side there was nothing except one beautiful apple tree and weeds four feet high, an indication that the soil was good. On the west side, there was a tall fig tree with beautiful form, a huge daphne, and a few other plant specimens. The boundary wall was red, hollow tile, a horrible-looking thing which we painted a soft grey-green, a pleasing background for plants. We decided to develop a showpiece garden on the studio side--no lawn, of course, low maintenance, raised beds, and a large sand pool bordered with tile.

We set up a mobile over a sand area, a surface to receive the shadow. We didn't want to pave the whole area. Everybody teased us about that. They called it the biggest sand box or kitty parlor in the world. However, this proved to be a very interesting experiment because when people came to see us about designing their gardens, they would look out and see this mobile hanging over the sand pool. It looked far-out to them and strange. Many asked about it. It was too queer for some.

The conservatives, such as the people who wanted a Cape Cod house and garden, never came back, to our delight. Many eastern people had come in to the area during the war. Our garden was too far-out for them. It became a marvelous sorting gap, selecting those people who had some imagination and would like to employ us. That was a great device. I wish I had had one much later in my practice. When people asked us what we did, we would say we were "space designers." That was a few years ahead of the "space age," or "Space," the landscape architecture student publication at UCB.

It was right at this same time that a second exhibit of Bay Region landscape architecture was organized at the San Francisco Museum.\* Doug Baylis was one of the real promoters of that exhibition. The landscape architects were invited to install exhibits as well as show plans and photographs of their work. Doug wanted real exhibits. It was then that the architect, Ben Polk, designed the support for Claire Falkenstein's mobile and put it in the show, placing it in our

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\*"Landscape Design," San Francisco Museum of Art and Association of Landscape Architects, San Francisco Region, 1948. See Appendices.

office garden later. The spiral support was a part of show business, really. We would not have had it made of turned steel pipe without the incentive of the San Francisco Museum exhibition.

Katherine Imlay, in the meantime, had married Morgan Stedman, the architect, whom she met while working on the Nell estate. I had not mentioned the Nell garden, which was for a very charming house on a marvelous large site overlooking one of the Spring Valley lakes in Woodside. The reinforced adobe house and guest house with a large court between were designed by Morgan, who brought me into the job just at the start of construction.

Morgan's clients were interested in the new California material, adobe stabilized with an asphaltic emulsion, being produced in the Fresno area. This house had a steel frame and adobe walls. It became a kind of symbol of the California house, built before Sunset magazine popularized the style.

Everything about the place had an amplitude typical of California in the early days. There were marvelous big oaks on the site. The scale of the whole place was just right, really charming, with great appeal. This job presented a great opportunity to experiment with other materials in the garden. I found handsome ceramic seconds at the Gladding-McBean Company's production yard in the San Jose area. They had formerly made all kinds of ceramic architectural moldings, often used by Julia Morgan and many of the early architects in California.

The early Spanish influence in California inspired the production of this sort of architectural ceramics. The San Jose plant was no longer making such material, but they had a "bone yard" where we found many useful pieces. The re-glazed materials were the perfect complement to the dull adobe. We used a lot of them on the Nell estate to edge a small fish pond, as coping for adobe walls, and as a smooth surface for sitting.

Katy, having met Morgan on the Nell site, felt very romantic about this site and the development of it. They were married some months later. Katy showed less and less interest in school projects and the larger projects that interested me. Her lack of discipline made carrying on the office work difficult. My training had been very different from Katy's. It was right for her to go on designing home gardens, working more and more with artists, while I was working more and more with architects, engineers, and planners. It became clear that we would have to break up the partnership.

About this time a planner, Hal Wise, was able to persuade the City of Menlo Park to develop a professional zone, setting up the standards for the first professional zone in California. The first building designed for the professional zone was Allstate Insurance, just up Middlefield Road from my office. Higgins and Root got that job and immediately turned to me.

Buktenica: This was on Willow Road where Sunset magazine is?

Scott: It is up the road from there, built before Sunset built its new office. That tract had been a wheat field, a most beautiful field, with two or three great deciduous oaks. It really broke my heart to see it subdivided.

Standards for the professional buildings were new. They required landscaping and setting up a formula for the number of parking spaces per number of employees. I don't have a copy of that ordinance, but it's obtainable. Talking with the Allstate Insurance executives, who were moving from the San Francisco office to the peninsula, I discovered why they were moving.

They employed women, in largely part-time, low-paying jobs, to run various kinds of office machines, jobs that could be performed without necessarily working an eight-hour day, and they felt that if they got into a suburban area they would have a better work force. And they could work a six-hour day. This they hoped would cut their absenteeism and improve their employer-employee relationship. What else did they plan to do to improve conditions for their employees? Nothing.

I proposed to develop some recreation for their employees on the site, a completely new thought to them. I showed them there was a considerable amount of left-over space after we set up all the parking and the building space requirements. The work done by their employees was very confining, sitting at those machines. They were allowed to take half-hour coffee breaks, morning and afternoon, as well as full lunch periods. I proposed some outdoor areas where they could sit, or some mild recreational activities such as shuffleboard, volleyball, and badminton--short-term games and exercise to break the monotony of their jobs. Allstate Insurance and other similar companies later adopted this policy of providing outdoor recreation for their employees.

The next site to be developed was for Magna Engineering, just west of Allstate on the side street. These were both very interesting jobs because they were part of the first postwar activity on the San Francisco peninsula. Magna Engineering was a new firm which made Job-Smith, a combination tool to use at home, saws, lathes and drill presses.

Job-Smith was designed by two fellows who had worked together on a war project and came back to start this venture which flourished beyond their expectations. They enjoyed their success as did everybody in the office. Birge Clarke of Palo Alto was the architect for that job. The clients were delightful to work with.

The next site in the professional zone to be developed was for a map company, the Geological Survey. Tommy Church designed that site. At about that time, Sunset magazine also started to build their new office and demonstration garden with Doug Baylis as designer. (And I think it was this great interest in adobe construction that had been so successfully used in the Nell estate which prompted Sunset to build its building of Adobe. Sunset put out a book, about that time, on adobe construction.)

My next job in that tract was American Insurance on Middlefield just north of Allstate Insurance.

Buktenica: What was the official attitude about giving up farm land at that time? Wasn't there a Santa Clara County--I realize this is in San Mateo County--but wasn't there the Santa Clara County Master Plan for open space?

Scott: That came much later.

Buktenica: What was the attitude about this use of prime land?

Scott: Some planners made great efforts to try to stop the encroachment of subdivisions into orchard land, but "good" industry was needed also. Professional zoning was considered a great advance because these plants were not objectionable industries. Planners wanted to group professional offices in a park to make more pleasant working conditions for employees. (This was considered humane and right.) This particular area was adjacent to the Menlo Park town center within the township; it was not county land. It was inevitable that that handsome field would be developed.

Today we look at that zoning as wasteful of land. The Stanford lands development\* is an exceedingly wasteful procedure. The land-population ration wasn't that tight yet. People couldn't see that it was wasteful, and that they should not have been so lavish with the land.

What you were talking about was the encroachment of single family house subdivisions into orchard land, which is even more wasteful of land. Orchard land cannot be recovered once it is built over. You can grow wheat in lots of places, but orchards

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\*Stanford Industrial Park

are particularly adapted to a certain section of the valley. In Santa Clara County they made a great effort to save the prune orchards, the pear orchards, and the cherry orchards. They didn't save many of them because that law was not passed until some years later.

Buktenica: The orchards are virtually all gone.

Scott: When I was living and working in Palo Alto, I could drive to Los Gatos and out Blossom Hill Road, which in the spring really was Blossom Hill Road. As far as I could see there were trees in bloom, a magnificent sight. El Camino Real from Palo Alto to Santa Clara was then through cherry or pear orchards. The beautiful cherry orchards were near Sunnyvale.

The first encroachment into the cherry orchards was an outdoor theater. It was shocking to build that great big thing sticking up out of the orchards. Ed Williams, landscape architect, planted poplar trees around the great movie screen which did take the curse off. But the poplar roots ruined the land for the remaining cherry trees. However, the area was all subdivided soon after.

There was a great demand for residential work. I was more interested in these larger projects because they dealt with the spaces between and around buildings, but a good house on a good site can be a jewel. It's always fun to design for a sympathetic client. There is more scope in that area of aesthetics in private garden design than in larger projects which are often more physical planning than pure design.

The Bay Region style of architecture was developing. I enjoyed working with many different architects on the peninsula who were designing fine houses. We had many jobs going at once--often as many as twenty. At one time here in Berkeley, I had forty jobs in the office at one time. In Palo Alto I had fewer, but larger projects.

Buktenica: So you hit a complement of different kinds of work.

Scott: One interesting experience in San Jose [was] Higgins and Root and I decided to learn first-hand the restrictions within the subdivision ordinance. Five lots is the smallest subdivision so the costs per lot are very high.

There was an area along the creek in east San Jose where a parcel of land had been very badly subdivided into five lots, all too small, had very bad shapes, and had not sold because they were so poor. We decided to take that subdivision of five lots and make three good ones out of it. Nobody had ever made

this kind of a reduction so we had to go through a great amount of red tape.

To get the permits and pay the utility fees, we each invested one-third of a thousand dollars. Submitting the new plan, paying the fees, getting the utilities to comply, going through all the recording, took a long time. We called it the "Shoestring Subdivision." It was really reverse-subdividing, a very interesting experience. It was about four years before we sold the last of the three lots, and by that time, we each had made a hundred per cent on our investment.

We didn't want the property, we just wanted to go through this experience to understand the many complaints we were continually hearing. Farmers in the area who had a small farm which they wanted to subdivide complained bitterly. They felt that the fees were exorbitant and the time consumed in getting permits was unreasonable. We learned a lot about the process by going through it ourselves.

At that time, my insurance agent owned a chunk of property in Los Gatos that he wanted to subdivide and employed me to design it. It consisted of some bottom land sloping down to a creek, enough for eight or nine large lots divided into acre sites. We planned it the right way, figuring out the sites, placing houses on the sites, and drawing the lot lines in relation to each house instead of just chopping the area up in an economic way. If I hadn't known the owner, who had confidence in me, I never would have been able to work that way.

It's a good subdivision. I staked out the road into it on the site and mapped it afterward. Everything was done in an ideal way for a small subdivision. This and another small subdivision in the eastern foothills of San Jose were the only subdivision opportunities that came my way.

Buktenica: Were they requiring developers at that time to set aside the parcels of land for parks?

Scott: Not yet. For schools, yes, but not for parks. The requirements were different in each county and city. Santa Clara County was not a leader. San Mateo County was more advanced than Santa Clara County. We had very nice houses and sites to work on all through Los Gatos, Woodside, Menlo Park and in back of Stanford.

Buktenica: You continued doing industrial parks, also, and schools.



Scott: About nineteen schools, in Santa Clara County mostly. I don't think I designed any in San Mateo county, except Menlo Atherton High School on which I was only a consultant with Arthur Cobbledick.

Buktenica: This was all out of your Palo Alto office?

Scott: Most of it. I was finishing some of that work when I moved to Berkeley. But it had all started at least while I was in Palo Alto.

Another school job was for mentally retarded children. A law had been passed requiring that each county had to provide a school for handicapped or mentally retarded children over a stated number. If there were fewer than that, the children could be bussed to the next district. Santa Clara County had to provide one, in the Willow Glen district just outside of San Jose.

Mr. Hubbard, the superintendent of schools at that time, was a very fine and sensitive man, who gave us as much scope as he could in the design of that small school for mentally retarded children, ranging in ages from first grade through what would be junior high.

Buktenica: How large was the site?

Scott: I don't recall, but it was small. I planned another fairly large school for day boarders, a private school for handicapped, orphaned children. It was interesting to learn about their handicaps and what kinds of play apparatus they could use. We had to select the best stock equipment because there wasn't enough money for custom designed pieces.





Above left: "Miss Knight, landscaper," 1938.

Above right: Geraldine Knight Scott in San Jose, 1945.

Left: Geraldine Knight Scott with Garrett Eckbo, Blake Gardens, 1967.



XIV                    MOVE TO BERKELEY, 1952; KINDS OF WORK

Buktenica:    What prompted the move to Berkeley?

Scott:        In 1949, Mel was asked to take over a history of planning class at UC Berkeley because L. Deming Tilton, who was then the director of planning in San Francisco and teaching this course, dropped dead in class. Mel commuted from Palo Alto to Berkeley two days a week to complete the term and the next year he became a regular lecturer.

Professor Vaughan needed someone to assist him in the teaching of site planning. He asked me if I would consider it since Mel and I could commute together two days a week.

Buktenica:    You still were in your office?

Scott:        I was still running the office, coming up here two or three days a week, a four vehicle, two hour trip. We had to drive to the Palo Alto station, take the train to Third and Townsend, be the first ones off the train, to get the first bus to the terminal, to take the bus over to Berkeley, and walk up to the campus. I was often the person to open the Landscape Architecture office.

There was no other way. We didn't drive because the Bayshore Highway was then a two-lane highway, three lanes in part, a death trap we didn't care to chance. We lived like a couple of fire horses doing everything in split-second timing.

It became clear that this was going to be a full-time job for Mel. He was asked to give a second course in CRP which meant more commuting or a move to Berkeley. Our five-year lease on the barn was about to end so we had to either extend that lease, buy the barn, or move. The barn was a fire trap, as any barn is, and was also full of termites. Furthermore, Palo Alto was another conservative community, which Mel didn't enjoy, preferring a larger city with more cultural advantages.

Palo Alto was a good base for my work but I also enjoyed teaching at UC.

About that time we were invited up to Berkeley by former clients who wanted me to design a lathe house for them. We came up on a Sunday and looked over the site for the lathe house. They had also acquired a small lot to the north which I had encouraged them to buy after the City of Berkeley removed a water tank from it. It was a numbered lot on the subdivision map, although undersize. They had acquired it for three hundred dollars and I had helped them plant it in 1942 with native California plants so it wouldn't be an eyesore.

Buktenica: You had planned their garden earlier, hadn't you?

Scott: I designed the first part around their Henry Gutterson house in 1935, but I was away when they bought the adjoining lots, and Helen Van Pelt had added the pines and the other trees.

I knew the contours, slope and size of this little peninsula of land, and Mel and I decided it was about the right size for us. We asked if they would care to sell it. They said they would be delighted to have us for neighbors, and after looking up their costs, offered it for \$900, practically a gift.

Buktenica: What year was this?

Scott: This was 1950. I ordered a survey knowing that I could place a house on this undersized, steep-sloping site. I asked Howard Moise, who was teaching architecture at UC and had invited me to join him on a job designing property on Santa Barbara Road for Estelle Davis, if he would design our house.

Howard Moise's name or his work is not well known. He had been teaching architecture for some time, was a sensitive designer whom we knew from our earlier years in Berkeley. Howard and I had gone together to the camouflage classes taught by Professor Vaughan during the war.

Howard was a rather charming fellow, a good raconteur. He hadn't designed many houses, but each one was very sensitively designed. His sense of scale and proportion and his handling of the redwood detailing in the Davis house was very pleasing. I don't think he did as well on our house, but this is partly my fault because we wanted to use the same Calstone blocks, which I had used for garden walls. Calstone was manufactured on the peninsula from a by-product from deep oil well drilling. The color of the block is the natural color of the aggregate, not an added color. Howard agreed that Calstone blended well

with redwood. Bob Ratcliff has also combined these materials in several houses successfully.

Howard was a professor first and he didn't come through with the plans. I had to steal the plans from his office and finish them myself because we had to get in. He hadn't designed and built enough houses to be thoroughly practical. In some ways I knew more about construction than Howard, as I'd done a lot more actual work. In retrospect, an all-wood house would have been better on this site, avoiding the problems of joining the two materials.

The estimate on the retaining wall the full length of the house was about \$3,500, which at that time was a terrific amount. The whole house cost only about \$19,000. We realized that we had to cut the cost somehow. Howard consulted with the great engineer who engineered the UC stadium, a great engineer. He proposed bell footings joined by grade beam. The studio wall below the house is not a bearing wall but a curtain wall built up in front of the bell footings. I supervised all of the construction after the contractor refused to work with Howard.

There was an eight foot hole where the garden terrace is now, which was filled very slowly over a two year period and well tamped before paving. The fill wasn't supported by anything, simply stabilized soil. The garden built on this tiny site was a very tricky operation. It's a good example of proper site planning, a very good handling of a difficult site.

I commuted to Cal to assist Professor Vaughan in the site planning course. I had known Punk, as we called him, for years but had never worked along with him in this capacity. I found that he had a very clear mind, could state problems succinctly, so briefly that students didn't get what he was saying. Punk gave one lecture, said all he had to say on the subject of site planning, and left it to me. Punk never came into the class again until the end of the term.

He just turned the class over to me. I spent all of the rest of the term elucidating, bringing the material to a level that students could understand. I had never taught at the college level, only in adult education, an entirely different proposition. It was challenging, to say the least.

The site-planning course was open to students in architecture, planning, and landscape architecture. Mai Kitazawa, Dave Arbogast, Mel Webber and other now-famous planners were in that class--thirty-six very smart people.

I chose as a problem the Carlemont High School site, a highly controversial site being considered by that district. Because of all my school planning work, I had access to the surveys, although I was not the landscape architect for the job. The school board was trying to decide which of two sites to buy. Having two sites to evaluate made it a good problem.

I taught the site planning course in a practical way, making the students go all the way from site analysis, site design, model making, to placing the buildings on the contour model. They worked in teams, one member from each discipline. The planning students insisted that was site development, not site planning, although they were interested in the site selection process and the study of the community that I required, such as finding out about community attitudes and how far the pupils would have to travel to classes. There was this obvious cleavage in the class. As a landscape architect, I considered all of this material pertinent and Punk agreed with me.

One of the planners, a second year student, did very poorly. He acted superior but didn't do his share of the work, so I gave him a "D." Punk had followed the work of each team and backed me up, agreeing that the grades I had given were fair and right. That controversy became a very important case in the College of Environmental Design because the young man's father was the head of a public utility company and threatened the department saying that his son was unfairly treated. However, the grade stood, so that fellow had to take some work over the next year. Punk did not, however, ask me to teach site planning again.

The move to Berkeley was very difficult because I had many jobs on the peninsula under construction while teaching up here. We didn't have enough money to build the studio part of this house. Helen Norman Proctor continued to work for me. When we moved out of the barn she worked at home and carried on with some drafting for six or eight months. Somehow I got through that first difficult period of going down the peninsula to supervise jobs in progress in San Jose, Los Gatos, Menlo Park, Atherton, Hillsborough and Burlingame. A year and a half later, I was able to get another loan to finish the studio in our home while teaching at the same time.

The first person who worked for me in Berkeley was David Arbogast, a former student. He was the best student and designer/draftsman I have ever had. I was barely installed and did not know what the job situation was going to be, having just moved from the peninsula where I was well-known. He called me at the end of the summer and said he was going east,



but when he got back he would like to work for me. I was delighted. It seems that when he came back he had married Mai Kitizawa, and he hadn't even told his roommate. David is a very unusual person, not a talker, but he is a sensitive designer, excellent delineator, and we were most compatible. He was here from that time until I went to Japan in the Fall of 1954.

I didn't have enough work to keep David going the whole time I was in Japan, so I called Ted Osmondson and asked if he could use a wonderful draftsman, which took care of David, and I want off to Japan, but it was my loss.

American Insurance and the Santa Clara County Office Building were both under construction at the time I moved. The first jobs I did after I came up here were the Redwood City Tribune and Eastfield Children's Home, the live-in school for orphans in Cupertino. Other jobs were Pine Hill subdivision on the Stanford lands, Watkins-Johnson, Bissinger and Hiller.

I was also doing some research for the California Roadside Council, as a member of their board, and helped in the production of several brochures issued at that time. Also, I was active in the field of recreation planning and was invited to attend a number of National Recreation Association meetings, mainly composed of playground directors who were generally beefing about the poorly-designed play spaces. Unfortunately they were talking to administrators, not designers. They seldom knew any landscape architects and most of their play spaces had not been designed at all. They had just happened, play apparatus being placed without studies.

Sometimes I was the only landscape architect present. It was clear that the Recreation Association recognized the need for landscape architectural input, but I was a kind of token delegate who could exert little influence alone. I made a speech at each session urging them to invite more landscape architects. I couldn't be effective alone, so I kept suggesting names to those who were seeking guidance of people who ought to speak at national or regional meetings.

My practice continued to thrive after the move to Berkeley. I became too involved in my office to teach. The following spring quarter, Mai Arbegast was taken into the Department of Landscape Architecture as an instructor, giving a course in plant identification and some "planting design," after completing a thesis on that subject. She was a very strong person and taught right up to the point where she was about two weeks from giving birth to her first child.

Mai asked me if I would take over her class during her pregnancy leave, which I did. The next Fall, Professor Vaughan again invited me to teach a class with Mai, which we worked out together.

I had been working against billboards as a member of the California Roadside Council. In 1953, the Landscape Architects Licensing Law and the Outdoor Advertising Act both were passed. That law was both good and bad, unfortunate in the way landscape architecture was defined. The term "landscape freeway shall be deemed to mean a section or sections of freeway which is now or hereafter may be improved by the planting on at least on one side of the freeway right of way of lawns, trees, flowers, or other ornamental vegetation which shall require reasonable maintenance." This was interpreted to mean a sprinkling system.

This was the first time that the word "landscaping," a bad term, appeared in any legal document. This definition was most unfortunate and we have been stuck with it ever since. We knew that it would work against us because we knew even then that California was not going to have the water to irrigate all of its freeway borders. This idea of only allowing the outdoor advertising on a section with landscaping, which meant a sprinkling system, was a boondoggle of the first degree.

Now, here we are in 1977, really facing the fact that we don't have enough water to irrigate any roadsides. At that time, we could not get the state highway department interested in planting drought tolerant natives. They did improve their plantings in the later years using many drought-tolerant plants.

Buktenica: Well, I don't understand. Do you mean that you could place billboards where there was irrigation? I thought you could not place billboards where there was organized landscaping.

Scott: That was the big thing. The advertising people said, "We landscape the freeway for you." This is the way the advertisers got a strong foothold in many counties, and this was before we had county-by-county control of billboards.

We found when we looked at the problem that the man who was head of the state highway department called himself a landscape architect, but he had had no landscape training. He was an engineer really. Professor Shepherd and the California Association of Landscape Architects worked to get this man, Dana Bowers, out. An examination for landscape architects in the state highway department was held at our insistence, but

the examination was rigged. Questions were written so that Dana Bowers was the only person who passed.

Then we had Dana Bowers really entrenched. After all our work, we got just what we had before, only then he really had more authority than before. However, by putting a lot of pressure on Dana Bowers we did get him to employ each year one graduate of the department, and thus begin to get some people who were interested in trying natives without watering systems. It has taken many years to put that idea over.



## XV TRIPS TO JAPAN, 1954-55

In the spring or summer of 1954 my old friend, Mr. Obata, invited me to go to Japan with him. He hadn't been back to Japan since he left at the age of nineteen. The Korean War was over and he felt that it was time to return to the land of his forefathers. We had talked about going together many times. The trip would include one other former student, an art teacher at San Francisco State, and me. Well, it was certainly very appealing.

However, the cost of the trip was more than Mel and I could afford, having put everything we had into our house. When my aunt called me one day out of the blue and offered to give me the trip, I couldn't resist. In the meantime, United Airlines decided to give Mr. Obata the trip if he would take a whole tour group. Not liking tours, I hesitated, but Chiura convinced me that it would be a good tour because those he invited were all former students or members of the Asian Art Society.

Off we went in the Fall of 1954. Good fortune was mine from the start. Jack Pierce, one of the tour group, was a landscape architect who had been working for the city of Pasadena and studying Japanese art for many years. Hearing about Mr. Obata's trip, he promptly joined. His other reason for going to Japan was to see his old roommate from Cornell, Takumo Tono. Jack and Tono had preceded me at Cornell. Both were students of landscape architecture.

We were all exhausted by the very long trip--thirty-three hours elapsed by the time we got to Tokyo. Mr. Tono was right there to meet Jack Pierce after forty years. Jack introduced me but I excused myself as I was dead tired. The next morning on my breakfast tray was a nicely written letter from Mr. Tono, saying that he had talked to Jack far into the night and learned that I was going to stay on after the short tour to study Japanese gardens. He was very sorry he could not take me to Kyoto, but his brightest student (Tono was teaching at an agricultural college in Tokyo), Tad Kubo, would take me to see every garden in the area. This was unsolicited kindness beyond anything I could have wished for.

For the two-week trip our Japanese tour guide was Mr. Miura, a former professor of political science and economics at Kyoto University. He retired from teaching just as the touring business started. Miura felt called to serve his country by educating tourists who came to Japan. Mr. Miura had knowledge, charm and sincerity. I got to know him very well. He was exceedingly kind to me, both during the tour and afterward in Kyoto. Mr. Miura spoke English quite well and was gracious about answering many questions.

I bought a Japanese camera, a Nikon, for Professor Vaughan and used it to photograph on clear days. On the Obata tour we visited few gardens, many museums and private art collections, special exhibitions and demonstrations just for the Obata tour, the first American tour of Japan after the war. Chiura Obata had a considerable reputation as an artist in Japan.

The tour gave me a once-over-lightly, so that I could stay on in Kyoto alone with Mr. Miura's help. He guided me to an inn that had had some American servicemen on furlough after the Korean War. The management, therefore, understood some of my needs even though they knew no English. As a woman alone in Japan I appreciated the assistance of Tad Kubo and got about easily.

Mr. Miura called me each morning to give advice and directions. Tad Kubo appeared at the inn a few hours after I did with a plan of action already worked out--exactly which gardens I could see each day. Although a Christian, he had been fascinated by the Zen gardens from childhood and had gotten to know the head priests at most of the great temples. He had immediate entree to both private and temple gardens. Tad also introduced me to one of his private clients, who invited me to stay in her guest house. I left the charming inn and moved to the tea house of Mrs. Iwasa, another high point in the sequence of my good fortune.

Mrs. Iwasa had been studying English to help her two boys, whom she wanted to send to school in the USA. Mr. Iwasa was the owner of a chain of restaurants, including the catering service on one of the fast railways. His English consisted of four or five stock phrases, including Merry Christmas, but Mrs. Iwasa and I could communicate quite well. Like many wealthy society women here, she was bored not doing anything and liked to meet people, so she had opened a small gift shop, where I met her. She took an immediate liking to me, inviting me to come and live in her tea house. She also offered her car and chauffeur. Her car was an old Buick, a big car in Japan. If neither Mrs. Iwasa or Tad Kubo were free, they told the chauffeur where to take me. If I wanted to stop to photograph, the chauffeur was always agreeable.

The weather was also in my favor that Fall for it was a drought year in Japan. Many years the rains start at the end of October or the first of November but this year they did not. The Fall color was marvelous,

and the pictures taken with the Nikon's wide angle lens are really spectacular.

This trip to Japan was the culmination of my long interest in oriental art. It was most satisfying to see how the landscape garden really had been developed into a complete art form. All other designed landscapes I had seen--all the great gardens of Europe--were architecture put onto landscapes, geometry on the ground. The Japanese, on the contrary, had somehow assimilated the essence of scenery and been able to develop it into an art form.

Japanese garden design had already become crystallized, as any style does, with a particular way of executing each detail. To actually see these details in three dimensions, however, was a new and wonderful experience. The way that the Japanese develop sequential viewing as a way of experiencing a garden is completely different from any Western garden design. For me it was pure revelation.

There were no tourists in the temple gardens at that time. Most of the time Tad Kubo and I were the only visitors in a temple or private garden. We were often invited into the temple for tea ceremony and to sit quietly and contemplate the gardens. In this way, I enjoyed the most complete aesthetic experience accorded few Westerners.

I had to leave Japan to inspect the Santa Clara County landscape job, which was under construction at that time. They had set a terminal date and would not let me delegate the final review to anyone else. Before I left, I tried to negotiate this but the county insisted that I be there for a final inspection.

I left Japan in the middle of November, reluctantly, because the weather was still good. I was mesmerized by my Japanese experience, what is known as the "the Japanese head." I ate, slept and dreamed Japan. It had been such a marvelous, aesthetic experience. I'd be driving on any highway, not thinking about what I was doing at all. It was amazing that I didn't have any accidents that winter. All I wanted to do was talk about Japan. Mel can tell you.

People were very eager to hear about my trip, and my slides were excellent. I have a list of well over a hundred lectures that I gave in a two-year period after the two trips. My slide lectures on Japanese gardens assisted the Kusano Travel Bureau in getting people to join their Spring tour. They urged me to go see the gardens again in the Spring but I couldn't afford another trip. However, about forty-eight hours before the tour was to leave, Tak Kusano called again offering me a seat on the plane, half price due to a cancellation.

Mel could see that I would never be content until I got Japan out of my system. We had to take a loan even for my half fare, and I set off on forty-eight hours notice for Japan again. There wasn't time to let Tono,

Kubo, or Mrs. Iwasa know that I was coming back to Japan. When I got to Kyoto, I found Mr. Kubo very ill in the hospital and Mr. Tono on a lecture tour in the north, so I was on my own. Mr. Obata was helpful. He gave me a card of introduction which gave me entre everywhere.

Kyoto, with a grid-iron street plan and good street-car system, is a very easy city to get around. I went back to the inn where I had stayed my first days in the Fall but they were booked for all weekends. On Fridays I moved to the station hotel which was both noisy and very dirty. Finally, I appealed to Mrs. Iwasa. She scolded me for not getting in touch with her at once, and came right over and put me up in her guest house again, also offering her car and driver.

I went by myself back to all the temple and private gardens I had seen before. With my white hair, all of the priests at the temples recognized me, since I had been there before, and treated me with the same courtesy. I was able to take pictures of the same gardens in Fall and Spring, which makes a very interesting sequence. I bought another Nikon, same model, for myself this second trip.

I found that the high school students, boys particularly, were not afraid to try their English, required in school since McArthur had been there. Eager youngsters who knew a little English were very curious and helpful, directing me to the gardens, temples, bus, or quick lunch places, so I never got lost. That would not have been possible in complex Tokyo, but it was possible in the Kyoto area.

It rained a good deal that Spring, and when it rains in Japan, it pours. In a temple compound when it suddenly starts to rain and the water comes pouring off those great temple roofs, everyone rushes to sit under the eaves until the rain subsides. Several times I met interesting people also caught in the storm. The Japanese seem to enjoy a sudden shower, laughing and joking about being caught. A couple of Japanese teachers I met that way were especially friendly.

This second trip did satisfy me. I got to see all of the gardens again and understood the subtleties of design much better from the second viewing. I joined Mr. Obata at the end of his tour back in Tokyo, and made a trip from Tokyo to Sendai in the northern part of the island. His father, also an artist, was buried in Sendai. In fact, Mr. Obata was the third in a line of artists. Going with Mr. Obata to the tomb of his father in a Zen cemetery, was a very moving experience. It is their custom to bring beautiful little rocks to a tomb and reverently place them on the large headstone. It is a very nice ceremony.

There were a few interesting gardens in the Sendai area, more recent, that we would call baroque. The designers began to use elaborate, bizarre rock formations just because they were bizarre or curious rather than beautiful. They began playing with forms just the



way the baroque designers did in Europe. In fact, some of these gardens seemed grotesque to me.

The shrine at Nikko, north of Tokyo, is baroque. Both Japanese and tourists flock to see the buildings and the gardens because they are so elaborate, without restraint. From the early period of the very restrained Zen gardens, to this late example, is the same kind of development that all arts go through. The first gardens were designed by artists, by painters generally; Zen Buddhist priests who were also painters actually built the gardens. These late gardens have very little merit, but their workmanship is superb, even though the designs are overly ornate.

On this second trip to Japan I got a much more rounded view of Japanese culture. I began to see the social problems in Japan, the extreme poverty. I also became aware of a radical movement. In this formalistic society which had a proscribed way to do absolutely everything, I became aware of the customs that youths were rebelling against.

In Sendai, I stayed in a Red Cross Hospital with the sister of a client here. She was a psychiatric social worker in the American Hospital in Sendai. She had been there since the Korean War. From her and the doctors I learned about many other aspects of the Japanese culture.

When my money was about gone, I went back to Tokyo, which was exceedingly hot and uncomfortable by then. I could not get a plane out because of an airline strike. I had to cable my husband to intercede through a friend at TWA to give me the first seat on a plane out of Tokyo.

With pictures of the Spring trip, I was able to round out my series of slides and present better lectures on Japan. Many of my colleagues, however, showed little interest, acted superior, or as though nothing could be learned about garden design from Japan. However, clients, architects, and artists were tremendously interested in what I had learned.

I was particularly fascinated by the placement of buildings in the big temple compounds, and still believe that there is much more we could learn by an intensive study of these spatial arrangements of public buildings in compounds or campuses. These great wooden structures had been built over a very long period of time, sometimes three or four hundred years, which is also true of all civic architecture in Europe and in most cities--civic centers are not all built at once. But the designers in most civic areas have shown little respect for existing buildings. One building gets built and the next architect or planner or designer shows no respect for what was there before, neither spatially (in space relationship), nor in stylistic design, whereas in Japan there

seems to have been very great understanding of spatial and stylistic relationship between the buildings.

The temple compounds, some of which are a hundred acres or more, include housing as well as civic and religious structures because all of the priests and officials live in these compounds. Museums and buildings for a variety of purposes exist within the temple compound, and yet they have remarkable unity. There are Japanese books showing plans, but their texts have not been translated. One would really need to make measured drawings or take aerial views to illustrate and understand the subtle relationships. No series of slides or photographs can show the same thing that plan studies show. I have tried to interest several students in making such a study.

XVI LECTURER, UC BERKELEY, 1959-69; PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS, AND RETIREMENT

Scott: The fifties were a very busy and productive period. I did some writing, public lecturing, teaching, and many landscape jobs.

Buktenica: I started working for you part-time in 1956 or '57, and I remained part-time, also working for Doug Baylis. I worked on the Eddlestein residence and a couple of Japanese gardens-- Mitau, and Hecker down the Peninsula and the De Golyer home in Piedmont.

Scott: Since tourism to Japan had developed, there was a new interest in the Japanese house and garden. Several architects on the Peninsula were influenced by new books on Japanese joinery. Because I had given so many lectures on Japanese gardens, I had many calls to design the gardens surrounding these houses.

My response was always that I couldn't design a true Japanese garden because I am not Japanese. Such design is the result of a culture of which I've only seen the surface. Although I am very thrilled by it, it can't be reduced to formulas or recipes; in other words, a few lanterns and bridges does not a Japanese garden make. On the other hand, I have always used a lot of native stone. I consider stone as important a garden material as plants. And if a client wanted me to use stones the way I can use them, which won't have anything to do with copying the ritual selection and stone placement that occurs in Japanese gardens, I would try to design a garden that was in harmony with the house that the architect had designed.

On my second trip to Japan I met a young man named Frank Stout, an interior designer with training in architecture, who had inherited a very fine collection of Japanese bronzes. He was taking Mr. Obata's tour but was also on a buying trip. In Kyoto one day I bumped into Frank. Foreigners were very conspicuous at that time, there were so few. I told him that I

was about to get tickets to a Noh play. He said that was something he wanted to do too and suggested we go together. I learned that he was also a dancer and had a great collection of costumes and knew a great deal about Noh drama. We went to several plays together and became very good friends.

About a year after that trip, Frank called me and said he was going to build a new house. He wanted to display his collections and his intent was to do as authentic a Japanese house as possible. He asked me to do as authentic a Japanese garden as I could, to select the site, the architect, and be in charge of the whole thing. It was absolutely the ideal situation.

First I introduced him to Leslie Nichols, who had studied with Antonin Raymond, and they liked each other. Then we looked at sites together and picked the one I thought was most suitable, up behind Stanford. It was about a three-acre piece of land. This was an ideal project. We had the most wonderful time--Leslie Nichols, Frank and I. We saw eye-to-eye on everything. Every proposal that anyone made we agreed on. Everything fit.

Somewhere along the line, we discovered that we had all gone through the architecture school at Cornell. That was kind of amusing, and perhaps was the reason our thinking meshed so perfectly. Frank was wealthy and we never discussed money. It was the only job in my career where this was true.

I have many pictures of the finished project. It was published in a good many magazines. Frank's idea in the beginning was to leave his place as a county museum after he died. However, like many of my jobs, it was sold and remained a private residence.

In addition to my practice, I was also teaching part-time, although not every term. I had assisted Mai and we had given a joint course or two, but I didn't like this arrangement. I didn't get to know the students well enough, wasn't really responsible for their progress or grading, or for course content.

Mai had been a student of mine, and I had encouraged her to do her thesis on plant relationships--plant forms, textures, and colors. I was also on her thesis committee. It was an excellent thesis, the first on the subject. Mai knew plants, had had far more botany and horticulture than I had. But she didn't have an art background. Being Japanese, she had an intuitive sense of plant relationships, but hadn't formulated her planting design ideas. She didn't see plants primarily as

design materials as I do. She has since developed a very good feeling for planting design and is an excellent teacher.

Buktenica: You withdrew from your assisting role then?

Scott: I did not want to teach unless I could plan and be completely responsible for the content of my own course.

The third exhibition of landscape architecture was held at the San Francisco Museum of Art in 1958. There had been one in '37 and '48. The 1958 catalogue significantly contains articles on geography and climate, parks and recreation, the artist and the landscape, and residential landscape, which shows that after the war, landscape architecture was broadening, both at the University and in general practice. This is quite different from what had been shown in 1948.

By 1958, Mel finished writing his book on the San Francisco Bay Area and gave it to the UC Press, so we took ourselves off to Europe, our first trip since 1939, having vowed then that we would return at least every seven years. Since Mel was a lecturer, he did not get a sabbatical, and the result was that he was off the UC payroll during a leave of absence.

I had a tremendous amount of work going, but somehow managed to bring the jobs to a plateau, and off we went for five months. We rented out the house but kept the studio. Harry Tsugawa, working for me then, was also working for his father part-time. Harry was competent and kept things going, using the studio. I had several jobs under construction. It was probably one of the biggest years of my career. I had more than forty jobs going at that time, industrial and professional sites down the peninsula that were either in the planning stage, still to be approved, or in construction.

During this trip Mel and I looked at European cities in a very different way than in 1939 when we had studied public housing. We had become disillusioned and realized that public housing had as many faults as virtues in the way it was being administered. Our interests had broadened into planning, public art and architecture. We picked up a new Volkswagen at the factory in Wolfsburg, drove back to Hamburg, through the Lowlands, across, and down through France, and Italy. It was the perfect car for the narrow and rugged roads of the west coast of Italy and all around Sicily, returning to Naples and Rome. We shipped the Volkswagen from Naples and did the rest of our travel by bus and train.

Buktenica: Which mode do you prefer?

Scott:

When you travel by train or bus you get to talk to local people and see a lot more of the life of each place. Lugging bags and a heavy typewriter every place is a chore, however. Mel wrote at least a thousand words every night. Portable typewriters were not yet the neat little machines that Olivetti introduced. We are both small people, and although we traveled as light as possible, handling luggage gets tiresome. A car has that advantage and you see more of the landscape than you do from a train. You can also stay in charming villages where you would never arrive by train. So both modes of travel have real advantages and disadvantages.

The landscape of western Europe was different from any I had experienced. Travelling from northern channel ports in Holland, Belgium, Germany or France up the rivers which rise in that great central region, we experienced a land so long husbanded that there is no trace of wildness or wilderness. There are wood lots and hunting preserves but they also have been tended, cleared of underbrush, neatly stacked as faggots.

Each country, each minor region or province, has set its mark upon the landscape in a particular way. Wine grapes are grown in every canton of Switzerland and province of France, Germany and Italy but each variety adapted to its locale makes a different pattern on the land. It may be the spacing of the vines, their pruning, the direction of the rows, or the staking and or tying of long branches that produces the distinctive pattern, but for the seeing eye there is endless delight.

A transect across France shows the hand of man, the farmer, in every mile, not mother nature. Moving south, with every road we felt a very slight softening and warming of the air and new and greyer tone of green in the landscape from almond orchards and the occasional olive trees. Farther south, the greyness is increased by fields of sage and lavender and more and more olives, each field with its own distinct pattern. As you approach the Mediterranean, you see a greater variety of greens, some greyer, some more yellow-green and glossy such as lemons espalliered on south walls.

The architecture has changed too, as well as the geography, but that has been photographed and painted so often that it is not new. It is the long-cared-for landscape that is novel to the landscape architect from America. Field shapes in Europe are infinitely varied, seldom, if ever, right-angled or fenced with wood. The boundary markers are stone walls roughly or neatly piled, or ditches.

Each trip I have made in any foreign land, I have given thanks for an education that opened my eyes to the infinite variety of patterns on the land, the expression of each culture, that long slow learning which selects and places each species where and when it shall flourish.

In Japan, I was fascinated by the many methods of stacking, bundling or hanging the harvested rice to dry without mildewing, the direction of the rows oriented to catch the right degree of drying breeze, a science not learned in one generation.

We were particularly interested in seeing all the ancient Greek sites in Sicily, more interesting than those on the Greek mainland. Many of the cities in Greece are located on lowlands at the mouths of rivers, which became flooded or totally inundated. They were really poor sites, whereas in Sicily the Greeks picked promontories--rocky sites--which are magnificent city settings.

We flew from Rome to Tunis to Madrid, Mel's first view of Spain, my second. Mel went to Segovia and Toledo without me because I got an impacted wisdom tooth--an interesting experience, to have an extraction without knowing any of the language and on a holiday weekend! In Madrid, I received a cablegram from Burt Litton, acting chairman of the Department of Landscape Architecture, saying the department had some money and an opening and asked if I would care to teach a course in the department. I cabled back my willingness to talk about it. I wasn't convinced that I could really have an appointment on my terms.

When I returned, we talked it over. Although they really didn't have enough money to pay me adequately, I decided that I'd like to try teaching my own course, in planting design. I felt that this subject was practically ignored in the Department of Landscape Architecture and in the profession generally. I felt that most of my colleagues did poor plantings, that their potentially good ground plans were seldom realized in the third dimension.

There was no precedent for teaching the subject. I was then confronted with the problem of outlining a course which, believe me, is hard work. I had to formulate the ideas that had guided my work, which has been an intuitive or subconscious process, and find a way to present these ideas to students. I was innocent of the many theories of education, so I was dismayed by the organizational problems of presenting design theory, the aesthetics of designing with plants.

When I asked my colleagues for guidance, I got no help. Either they didn't know the answers, had solved the problems to their own satisfaction, or were bored with discussing theory. I was struggling with problems such as whether to begin with the general and work toward the specific or to begin with a specific example and try to develop the idea into a general principle? These two theories of education I had to grapple with alone. In practice, I found that both worked depending on the examples I could use as illustrations.

Planning that new course was the challenge I needed for by that time, I had done so many landscape jobs that they were beginning to fall into a pattern. Even the tremendous variety that's in the profession of landscape architecture began to be repetitious. Clients asked the same kinds of questions and I could hear myself giving the same kinds of responses. The private owner or the vice-president of this or that company all acted just the same; you got no decisions unless you could cut through and get to the president. Jobs began to be repetitive and, therefore, a little dull. Teaching was a new challenge, an entirely different situation, which I enjoyed.

A lectureship might be just that, you lecture and the student receives or he doesn't receive. But in the design laboratory or studio, it's an exchange between you and the student in every instance. The student comes with a certain knowledge and preconceived notions, either with a very open mind or already with a good many prejudices and you are trying to meet that person and learn from him. It's very much an exchange. In the profession, no matter how many clients, it becomes monotonous and repetitive. After a while clients become types.

Corporate office designs are worked out with a board of directors, a problem in group dynamics, educating the group and getting feedback from each of the people you're dealing with. That's more challenging than dealing with a single client. As a designer, you try to meet the client's needs but the client is not educatable [sic] in the time you can spend with him.

Custom design is very expensive, and the economics of a situation don't allow you the time to educate your client. So a compromise is made and you produce a design for the price the client can afford to pay. After all, landscape architecture is a profession and you have to make a living at it. That aspect is entirely removed in the teaching situation. Economics doesn't enter into the equation. Teaching is in the realm of ideas and exchange of ideas. I found that to be a fulfilling kind of experience. Private practice often is satisfying but it also has the economic price tag.



Today we've moved into a corporate world structure where the jobs are dealing with people who have learned a good deal about group dynamics and how to deal with other professionals, so it's an entirely different process. There are a lot of courses being offered to landscape architects now at the adult education level, university extension level, to teach landscape architectural firms how to deal with larger groups of managerial people on a corporate, state, or national level. The whole negotiation and education process is much more complex but the people who come to it have had some education in it and desire to achieve a result that will be satisfactory to a large number of people instead of one or two. It is more rewarding if you have any social consciousness at all.

At the teaching level, you're working on all of these ideas without a price tag. There is always a time limit without an economic limit. You're also communicating with young minds that are open and many of them still free about showing their emotional responses, which is great. So you can touch them at the aesthetic level. Even though they may not have any experience in art and may not know much about it historically or from direct experience, they're still vulnerable to ideas. And that's what's exciting about teaching. I can easily see how a lecturer in physics, botany or history, who goes on lecturing about the same subject for twenty years can get bored with teaching. At the studio level, however, I can't see why teaching should ever get boring. But it can be exhausting.

The last two years I taught three classes every semester and I didn't have any T.A. because Ronald Reagan was then governor and cut the UC budget. I had thirty-two students in planting design, each doing individual projects, totally exhausting. I really put my whole soul into teaching, and it was a monumental job without a T.A.

[The following dictations were added later by G.K. Scott.]

Scott: I recall my years as a lecturer in the Department of Landscape Architecture, intermittently from 1949 to '58 and continuously from 1958 to '69, as both challenging and rewarding in unexpected ways. I had not completed work for an M.A. at Cornell because I yearned to practice my chosen profession and was bored with the academic approach, quite certain I would never want to be a professor. By the 1950s, however, after experiencing various modes of professional practice in a rapidly changing socio-political world, I felt that I had enough experience to guide young students.

When Burt Litton, then acting department chairman, offered me a half-time appointment to teach my own course, I chose to call it planting design, a subject not included in the curriculum and generally neglected in office practice. My emphasis had always been on design while believing that landscape architecture is both an art and a science.

The debate about the proposed move of the department from the College of Agriculture to the College of Environmental Design was lively, producing many memos and no consensus. Some faculty members realized that valuable connections with forestry, soil technology, and other agricultural sciences would be weakened or lost while architectural design and construction were strengthened. Plants and planting were already being de-emphasized in favor of broader site analysis concerns in both office practice and course content.

Published landscape work of the period after World War II is mostly of constructed design elements, pergolas, pools, pavings, walls and garden shelters, work stations. The selection and placement of trees, shrubs, vines and hedgerows appears incidental, haphazard, and often detracting from rather than augmenting the design statements made by the constructed features. Planting plans had not been made by the same designer but left to the least experienced young person in the office. I, therefore, planned my course to fill a void, emphasizing the use of trees, shrubs, and hedges as design materials to articulate landscape spaces.

In searching for and preparing visual aids, I was delighted to find a set of old slides of drawings which illustrated my points clearly. They had been made by Bob Royston years before, but seldom taken from the rack since his time. I found other evidence of Bob's strong design legacy.

My strong background in art and visual perception augmented by extensive travel and study in Western Europe, Mexico and Japan, as well as varied professional practice and concerns with public housing and planning, were the resources upon which I drew.

I was fortunate to be associated with the Department of Landscape Architecture during a period of expansion when such talented people as Brinck Jackson, Irevin Zube, Bob Buchanan, Roger Martin, Tom Brown, Tito Patri, David Streatfield, and Michael Laurie were there--also Barclay Jones in City Planning and Dick O'Hanlon in the Department of Art. I recall the campus design problem Bob Buchanan assigned his students, of alternative locations for the proposed undergraduate library as

a most significant example of good teaching involving the whole department faculty and students.

Although Professor Vaughan and Dean Wurster had concurred in having Thomas Church make a long-range plan for the Berkeley campus, which clearly defined those spaces which should remain as glades or open spaces, Dean Wurster was the first to ignore that plan by approving the location of the Moffitt [Undergraduate] Library. This failure of concordance in point of view between the Department of Landscape Architecture and the Department of Architecture was a preview of the relationship between the Department which was not clarified or strengthened by the move to Wurster Hall.

I particularly enjoyed the privilege of talking my classes on field trips, walking about the Berkeley campus at a time when trees selected and planted by Professors Gregg, Shepherd and Jones were old enough to be handsome specimens, and also when campus maintenance was at a high level under the sensitive direction of Ari Inouye.

There were many exceptional students during the 60's, especially the classes of '64 and '65, whom I enjoyed taking on field trips to Santa Barbara, the Monterey peninsula and up the coast to Mendocino. The fern canyon which is in Van Damme State Park is one of the best examples of trail building and stream bank control in California. Most of that work was sensitively accomplished by the CCC, which included some graduates from the Department of Landscape Architecture.

The 60's were a challenge to both students and faculty. We all learned much about the democratic process. It became clear that UCB, although a great state university, is not a truly democratic institution, that all of hundreds of researchers, adjunct professors, and others not on the academic ladder had no vote, that the Academic Senate is not a truly representative body.

Many students quickly changed from starry-eyed romantics into politically conscious citizens. Some saw the implications for the profession of landscape architecture. Some students felt they learned little during that period. In retrospect, I do believe that the Department of Landscape Architecture gained in solidarity and status within the college under Vaughan's wise administration during the Free Speech Movement, particularly.

I did not always agree with Punk but respected his judgement, his generosity and genial hospitality in hosting visiting scholars such as Hansen from Denmark, Cabrol from

Spain, faculty and student groups both, at his Pt. Richmond home and his property adjacent to Salt Point. [End of addendum by Mrs. Scott]

About 1962, Professor Vaughan asked me to take on the management of the Blake estate, a ten-acre piece of property in Kensington which had been given to the Regents of the University of California specifically for the use of the landscape department. It had a large collection of plants which Mr. and Mrs. Anson Blake and her sister, Miss Mabel Symmes had brought together. They were all interested in horticulture. Miss Symmes had studied garden design as a student in the first course in landscape gardening in 1913 with Professor John Gregg and Katherine D. Jones. She did not receive a degree in landscape architecture.

The Blakes owned property where the International House stands now but sold it to the University and bought about eighty acres in Kensington. They later sold off all but about ten and a half acres and developed a garden. The Blakes, avid plant collectors, had exchanged plants and seeds with people all over the world. Starting with a bare hillside, they planted both exotic and native plants which had grown into a jungle by the time I was asked to manage the garden. The Department of Landscape Architecture used Blake Garden as a place to learn plants but not much had been done to control the jungle.

For me, Blake Garden was like any big remodel job. I had to pull out diseased and distorted trees and prune, prune, prune. I used up all the budget I had each year with tree removal, getting rid of the old greenhouse and accumulated debris. Opening up areas became highly controversial because the neighbors loved the jungle as it was and some people in the department also thought I was taking great liberties with the place. However, I persisted. Finally, the department decided that a long-range development plan should be made for the Blake estate. That job was also handed to me.

Again, as always, I found that my colleagues took little interest in the Blake estate. They usually acted superior to anything concerned with planting and didn't want to be bothered with it. So the Blake estate was considered a project that used up too much of the departmental budget because I was always fighting to get more money to really do something to improve the garden spatially. The Blake estate was under the president's office and the vice-president I dealt with always referred to Blake Garden as "a real can of worms." It was a very discouraging project.

My long-range development plan was presented and accepted by the Landscape Architecture Department but never presented to the College of Environmental Design faculty.

The house was not occupied until Mrs. Kerr, the wife of the then president of the University, got the bright idea that Blake House would be a fine place for graduate women students to live. She put her idea to Prytanean Society, a women's honor society. This didn't seem like a good idea to me, but I didn't have any authority. The house was refurbished at considerable cost, more bathrooms were put in, and a few bedroom partitions. The fall quarter started out with twelve or fourteen graduate women living there, but it was so removed from the University the girls didn't like it. After about a year and a half, no students registered to live there.

The house had been cleaned and we had had to make some changes immediately adjacent to the house so that the girls would have a place to be outdoors and get some sun, where they could dry their hair. Girls are always washing their hair. The girls also fed the deer that roamed there, made pets out of them. We had had enough problems with deer before, but when the girls started feeding them, then the deer trampled all around the house and ate everything.

After the house was empty again, there was a great deal of discussion about what to do with Blake house. Later it was decided that it should become a presidential residence.

Buktenica: At that time, the president was living on campus?

Scott: Yes and no; Clark Kerr had his own home, not on the campus. The next president was Dr. Hitch. A survey of the Blake House and the garden was made to determine what changes would have to be made to make it suitable for a presidential living space and at the same time let the Department of Landscape Architecture use it as a teaching facility. It was decided to separate off a portion of the garden adjacent to the house for the use of the president. I was employed to make that plan for remodeling the garden. The architect was Ron Brocchini.

[Mrs. Scott notes: "For the complete story of the Blake estate, see the oral history entitled Blake Estate Oral History Project, Regional Oral History Office, The Bancroft Library, UC Berkeley, 1988." This 582-page oral history volume includes interviews with family members, architects and landscape architects, gardeners, staff, and two presidents of UC to document the history of Blake House and the Blake Garden. Geraldine Knight Scott, Mai Arbogast, Igor Blake, Ron and Myra Brocchini, Toichi Domoto, Linda Haymaker, Charles Hitch, Clark

and Catherine Kerr, Walter Vodden, Norma Willer, and other family members and persons associated with the use of the house were interviewed.]

About this time, the Garden Clubs of America had begun to ask landscape architects to offer some short courses for their members. Many professionals have felt superior to the garden club movement, but a lot of support has come from garden clubs. Garden clubs flourished in Natchez and many southern cities. There were and still are many intelligent women with good art educations in the Garden Clubs of America. They wanted to know what landscape architecture was all about. They wanted to know when they were looking at a good garden versus a poor garden; that is, to learn the history of and how to judge garden design.

The first course was organized in Georgia by Hubert Owens. Each university which had a landscape architecture department was asked to sponsor short courses. These were three-day courses for which a certificate was given to each of the women who took the full course. Almost every garden club sent one or two members to these courses.

This was another teaching situation in which each professional landscape architect had to think about how to organize his material to present it to lay people, to intelligent adults, in capsule form. I was asked to participate in each of those short courses and did. They were given in Berkeley in '58, '59, '60, and '61. Punk asked me to present the history of landscape architecture in California, which required a lot of research and stimulated my interest in the history of the profession.

In 1959, Mel's Bay Area book was finally published. It had taken more than a year to get it through the UC Press. Mel had been teaching all this time, two or three days a week. The San Francisco Bay Area. A Metropolis in Perspective is, of course, now out of print, sold out. A second edition was published in 1985.

Regional parks, and the larger developments that I would have liked to have designed, required an office tooled in a different way from mine. I agree with Garrett [Eckbo], who says over and over, "Each one of us has only so much energy and we each decide how we will spend it." It seemed too late in time for me to go after the larger jobs or to pretend to be a consultant in a field in which I had little experience. I was invited to participate in a number of larger projects. But I hadn't actually done anything in that category; I didn't feel I could be a consultant on a scope of work that I had never

touched. Others may try it; I didn't feel I could. The best thing to do was to close the office.

Buktenica: It sounds like you were really clear on what you would rather have done at that time.

Scott: I would have liked to have been involved with larger and more challenging projects. However, I got to look at them another way by being on the design review committee for the City of Berkeley. I was on the Civic Art Commission for seven years and on the architect selection committee for a time. It was really very interesting to see how my colleagues presented their proposals. I've witnessed presentations by practically every landscape firm in the Bay Region. Some, I'm sure, resented my being there, hearing their pitches, the over sell, the under sell, or the snow job. Being a woman didn't help.

The City of Berkeley is a special place. The citizens serving on commissions are keen people who see through the snow job and the gab of supertalkers every time. The commissioners generally picked the best designers, but if they made a poor choice that firm seldom got a second contract. They looked back on the history of who had done what, so poor performers seldom were asked to present proposals again. I have lost touch with Berkeley planning at the present time, so I don't know how designers are selected. But for the seven years that I was a commissioner I knew. I was also head of the design review committee for University Avenue and for BART undergrounding.

Buktenica: I like working with review boards and recreation commissions. I like the whole interviewing process. I really think it's fair. It's stimulating. It gives you a chance to look at who you are, evaluate and present yourself--if you're not selling.

Scott: For some years I gave eight to ten hours a week to these civic projects, daytime as well as night meetings. It was a very rewarding experience but tiring. Serving on boards or commissions is an appropriate service activity for all landscape architects if they can afford the time. While teaching at UC you are expected to do some public service. You are evaluated every year in the University for teaching, research, public service, publications and executed works. A teacher, whether or not on the academic ladder, must take part in community affairs to stay in the University. A list of how many outside lectures you gave and how many conferences you participated in is reviewed each year.

Buktenica: It's sounds brutal. Extracurricular activities take a lot of energy.

Scott: It is a strenuous but interesting experience. Teaching is a very different experience. The teacher-student relationship is entirely different from the designer-client relationship. Perhaps later, after ten years, even students began to fall into types and categories. In the beginning, each student is a unique individual. But it's easy to see how a professor who teaches for thirty years becomes calloused and dull because he has already got his students categorized. That's deadly to them and to him. As long as you see every student fresh and clear, as an individual, potential learning unit, teaching is fascinating.

Buktenica: The sabbatical system doesn't keep people fresh then?

Scott: It helps, no doubt, but as lecturers Mel and I didn't get sabbaticals. We just took ourselves off on trips a couple of times.

Buktenica: That's why inviting outside lecturers into a department is important, because it really keeps the department fresh.

Scott: It does give the students other points of view, but there is another aspect of having part-time professors come in, often unprepared. They rely on their experience, but without organizing their material for presentation. They teach off the cuff. One can come in as a critic in design without preparation although a good critic must give his whole attention to each problem presentation.

The best critic I have ever watched or listened to was Hideo Sasaki, because he had the ability to concentrate like a great violinist, singer, or performer. He put his entire mind on what he was doing. He absolutely enters into each project with each student, and if you speak to him about something else, he doesn't hear you. He is absolutely involved, talking only to the student. He gave up part-time teaching because he really wore himself out doing it. Sasaki taught at Harvard for a long time and came to UC only as a visiting critic. But as his office got larger, he decided he couldn't do both. I admire Sasaki as a person of great integrity. He recognized how difficult it is to do both.

Some people who come into the University for two afternoons a week get so overloaded, and since their first commitment is to their clients they are only half with the student and most of them are not very good teachers. I think it takes a real commitment to teach, even on a half-time basis. Two half-time jobs always add up to more than full time.



So I was teaching, remodeling the Blake estate and running my own office. I was carrying a fantastic load. I was very tired from teaching. The last two years were exhausting. I wanted to quit the year before when Garrett was chairman, but he couldn't find anyone else so I tried it one more time and it was crazy. So I quit the University and retired, closed my office and went travelling.

We went to South America first then made a trip in this country. Every year for about six years we made on trip abroad and one trip in this country, big trips, four or five months at a time.

[End of interview conducted by Jack Buktenica]

[The following questions were inserted by typist and landscape architecture student Elizabeth Greene.]

Greene: You were happy to retire, then?

Scott: Absolutely. I was totally fed up with the University because the rewards were not commensurate with the effort. Since neither Mel nor I were on the academic ladder, we didn't get any sabbaticals so we had to take them. Neither of us was well treated by the University. I have more background and reason to be put on the academic ladder but I didn't want to be on the academic ladder and I was given a salary commensurate with a full professor, step II. Salary was security of employment.

Punk came to me earlier and said he could get me on the academic ladder but that he only had so much budget and if he fought to get me full recognition it would deprive the department of funds for a young instructor coming in, which was desperately needed. At that point I said, "Okay, I'm at the end of my career. If the department needs that, that's the way it is." With hindsight it wasn't fine because I have had no recognition as a person who gave a lot of time and effort to that department. Officially I was a visiting lecturer.

When the college was twenty-five years old, it put out a brochure in which I'm not even mentioned, after initiating the course and doing the Blake estate. And Mel is only mentioned for having run extension courses for planning for a couple of years which he loathed and got rid of as soon as possible. But he had written two books while there. More than anybody in the whole college had ever done.

Greene: After you left how long did it take until you felt that you wanted to renew your association?

Scott: Eight years. I did weaving all that time, and we travelled. I kept up many activities and started others. I became a member of the Oakland Museum, and a private art foundation which set up the Berkeley Art Center. I helped the weaving school become a school. I helped them become a non-profit corporation and establish their board because they didn't know how to do it. I did that for about eight years until my back wouldn't let me do it.

I had taken quite a leave from the profession. I really wasn't doing anything except reading the journals. What really got me going again was going to an IFLA meeting in Vancouver. I hadn't gone to any other IFLA meetings, but I was invited to the one in Vancouver and knew that it was the only place on the West Coast that had a simultaneous translation system and it was the only place that could sponsor an international federation meeting. Also, I had a lot of friends in Seattle and I could tie it in with all sorts of other things.

The meeting was well done and very interesting. There were many former students and people from different parts of the world and they were all doing great things and I was fascinated by what they were doing. I decided that I really owed my profession some more active part so I began being more active. And just after that Carlisle Becker asked me to be an advisor to the extension program.

In the meantime, I had been called back to Cornell a couple of times. They had killed their Department of Landscape Architecture and for a while there was none. After starting out in the best possible light, somehow or other they stopped. They then developed a school of environmental art and design as a graduate school. They thought that landscape architecture ought to be included. In order to do that, they called back some alumni in different fields. I was called back in landscape architecture because I had had my own office, taught and was a woman.

I made two trips to look at the program. They have an undergraduate Department of Landscape Architecture on the Ag campus, as it was here. What they were trying to decide was if they set up a graduate school of landscape architecture, who would be eligible? Who would come to it? They invited me to participate in a conference to decide how to set up the department and who would be eligible to be admitted.

Greene: Were you involved with the ASLA before you retired?

Scott: Oh, yes. I had been a member since 1962 and I was made a fellow in 1972, after I retired. I always felt that Punk engineered that because he knew very well that the University hadn't really treated me fairly. Of course, at that time each chapter could nominate two people for a fellowship each year. I know that Punk nominated me in this chapter and there was no opposition. I was quite amazed when I received the invitation because my influence is entirely local.

Since the ASLA has gotten so much bigger, they are trying to nominate people with national importance. We have 8,000 members now; we had 2,000 when it started. There's a great debate on whether they should make many more fellows or insist that each person have done something of national recognition. The consensus at the last meeting was that the standard still held. They would not make more fellows, which Roger Martin was urging, but it would remain that each chapter nominate two people. A committee has been set up to make the decisions and they have to have more specific criteria. There has been a push to liberalize the ASLA.

Greene: What are the social responsibilities for the landscape architect?

Scott: The landscape architects' responsibilities, if really looked at, are stewardship of the land, conservation of natural resources, and protection of resources. How can landscape architects not be concerned with total landscape and the preservation of non-renewable resources?

There are many social responsibilities. This is still debated within the profession. You can't get the profession to take a stand on atomic waste, for instance. It's a hot potato politically. They might want to debate it but not take a stand. I think it is our responsibility to take a stand. And I hope that the time will come when the profession as a whole, the ASLA, will take a stand against the proliferation of arms and against disposal of atomic waste, all waste, because a landscape architect who really cares about the environment must be of this persuasion. I'm amazed at how many are not.

The individual must give as much of his or her time as possible working toward this at any and every level--the neighborhood level, the state level, wherever it's possible, by serving on commissions, juries, and committees, speaking out and always being for conservation and preservation with concern for the total landscape, every piece of it. Many of these are changing dynamically all the time. We all can't know everything, but we can try to be being alert to what science is learning all the time.

Should we take a stand on genetic engineering? I think we should. Should we as a profession and as individuals have a position on the frost-free bacteria problem? We can't get educated on everything but we should at least have an open mind and be trying to learn, listen and read about all the sciences developing. We should be grappling with these problems as well as with whatever is an individual's segment of the profession.

There was a time when just the word conservation was not admitted within the landscape profession. Conservation was not considered landscape architecture. I'm pleased that in my lifetime we've come to the point where the majority of people accept conservation as landscape architecture. It can be argued that landscape architecture is dynamic, it is doing something, imposing design on the land, and that by contrast conservation is maintaining the status quo. And so you can say they are not the same thing.

I see landscape architecture in the larger context. I feel that it should encompass that, but at the same time recognize that nothing remains the same, that conserving land--like the Nature Conservancy, which I belong to and support--is not enough. The land changes. You can't keep it. "Nature conservancy" must address the problem of managing the land that it holds. At first they didn't want to do it. They were only going to buy it and hold it until it could be turned over to some agency. But that doesn't work.

People who give money to conserve won't give money to maintain until they're educated. So an enormous bank of land was developed and then came the realization that land kept as open space deteriorates, or changes by natural forces, so that it isn't the same thing. Management must come in. This is a field that landscape architects need to and must go into. There are going to be many jobs in nature conservancy, managing and keeping the lands that that organization [Nature Conservancy] acquires in the best condition. For instance, land may be set aside to protect a species and then a disease or a predator comes in by natural processes and eradicates the species that was being protected. That's a field for landscape architects.

At one time, conservation was a political issue. When they wanted to set aside the Pt. Reyes National Seashore to preserve all the headlands, that became a highly political issue in the state of California. At the same time, we had a regulation called the Little Hatch Act, a state regulation after the McCarthy era that prohibited political activity on a state campus or in any state institution. Conservation of the headlands was a political issue and it could not be discussed

on the campus of the University of California. Lecturers couldn't be invited to lecture about it unless the pros and cons were presented. It could be debated but signatures could not be solicited to petition to save it. That was a political activity which could not be carried on on this campus.

I was in the department when we wanted to bring in somebody to show pictures of the Marin Headlands, a marvelous photographer who had done a great deal of photography in that area. Punk told us that it couldn't be scheduled because of the Little Hatch Act. He said we would have to wait until we could find a farmer who had land over there and could set up a debate and it would have to be a public debate not done within the department. The college would have to sponsor it and, of course, the college never did. This was how it was, and it shows you how far we have moved. The public has become educated by Friends of the Earth, the Sierra Club, and by the process of acquiring the Marin Headlands as a National Park.

California is always the leading state. Everything gets tried out here. I was always interested in conservation and took a great interest in the development of the Marin Conservation League. That's the first time in my personal experience that the word conservation was used. In a short time, there has been great development in awareness of ecological problems and the vast problems of water conservation. Water, drought, is the problem in California. Landscape architects must become more and more aware and reduce their use of water on individual jobs because water in the West is scarce.





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"... although landscape architecture is an art,  
one must proceed as though it were a science."

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## **Geraldine Knight Scott**

July 16, 1904–August 3, 1989

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Wilton Woods (The Grove),  
Berkeley, California,  
Geraldine Knight Scott.

Below: Geraldine Knight  
Scott at home, Sterling  
Avenue, Berkeley.  
(Photograph by George  
Waters, 1989)





### What the Telesis Group Experience Meant to Me

The principal concerns of Telesis are most clearly stated and developed in *Cities Are For People*, the book written by Mel Scott, illustrations and layout by Alvin Lustig of the Los Angeles Group.

Subsidized housing, public recreation for all age-groups and affordable transportation are no longer controversial subjects, although none of these objectives has been fully realized in larger metropolitan areas today (1989).

At the time the Telesis groups formed there were only a few Public Housing Authorities, mostly in the largest eastern cities. The city of Los Angeles had none, which was our reason for starting the LA Housing Council. Subsidized housing was considered the first step toward socialism by a largely reactionary electorate. There was a LA County Housing Authority for which Mel later worked. It provided some small units in unincorporated areas but had yet done nothing for the migratory workers.

Public recreation for all age-groups had hardly been addressed as an urban problem and freeways, bigger and better freeways, would solve all transportation problems of the LA Region, as had been envisioned in the great General Motors exhibit at the New York World Fair in 1939.

The discussion group was totally unstructured. Each meeting was a glorified "bull-session". Everyone was for the general ideas but some went off on the various tangents of their particular interest. We decided that the Telesis show in San Francisco had been premature; that the general ideas needed more exploration, and especially before they could be applied to the Los Angeles area which was an entirely different kind of area from the SF Bay Region.

The group went on discussing for more than a year, meeting about every two weeks, with people coming from long distances, from Pasadena, Bakersfield, Long Beach, and so on. Sessions lasted for many hours. Finally, since we were all visual-minded people, visual thinkers, we too came to the same conclusion they had come to in San Francisco, that we had to make our ideas visible. About that time Mel proposed to the AIA, who was about to have a show in the Los Angeles Museum, that instead of having the same kind of show that they had always had:

photographs of existing work, that they look ahead and do what we were proposing in Telesis. Amazingly enough, the idea took. They did agree. The director of the L. A. County Museum, Mr. McKenney, was also a very broad-minded person, something like Grace McCann-Morley, who had embraced the idea. This was however, a county museum. He was taking a big chance, because the Telesis ideas were considered visionary, socialist, if not radical. In a county museum he had a board of directors who represented quite different interests. Nevertheless, he went along with most of the ideas that we wanted to present. So when it came to designing an actual exhibit to fill a very large museum, the group had to divide up according to their interests and according to the ideas we wanted to put forth. So groups on housing, transportation, recreation, were developed. Because I had been running the Citizens Housing Council and studying public housing in Europe, I joined the housing group. The most dominant figure in that group was Richard Neutra, who was a primadonna, and very difficult. My role turned to be a kind of peacemaker between Neutra and others in that group with less comprehensive ideas, but better understanding of how much one could present in an exhibit. Mr. Neutra, with his very comprehensive mind, wanted to start at the beginning and tell the history of shelter beginning with the Egyptians, whereas the exhibit had to come to the present and the future.

Through Telesis, I met there some very talented people, with skills new to me. There were several animators from Disney Studios, whose talent in making models, was extremely great. And I learned by observing and working with them. There were industrial designers who had immediate kinds of applicable know-how. The show developed rapidly. The group had numbered maybe 45 people. When it came down to actually working at the museum were probably 20 or 25 who really put in lots of time, giving up all their weekends and many nights to actually installing the exhibit. The exhibit did open on time and was seen by x number of people; as was told in Mel's report. It attracted many visitors and got good reviews for several months when Pearl Harbor occurred, closing the museum. It also ended the housing council that Mel and I were running at the same time.

The housing council melted into a group for war housing which was immediately seen to be needed. War industries were already being developed in the San Pedro and Long Beach areas. I was offered a job in the Los Angeles County Planning Department, where the jobs were all civil service and open only to males. Some males were drafted; some had already gone into war work. Several of the planners had been in the Telesis group: Simon Eisner, Werner Ruchti, and others. No woman had ever worked at this kind of job in the county civil service. However, I could be taken in on a provisional basis and take the examination when it came along later, which I did. A woman in the drafting room was a new idea and some of the fellows in the office were sort of shocked. They did not want a woman in the office but after Werner and Si Eisner convinced them that I was not big enough to do them any real harm...The most radical thing I did, was to make them open the windows to get the smoke out. I found the air very bad. The fellows then said, "Well, we work in our shirt-sleeves, and it's hot in Los Angeles." And I said, "I do too." So okay.

I was employed in recreation planning and was dismayed to find how little had been done. I immediately set to work gathering statistics on what recreation did exist within the county: what playgrounds there were at what schools, how big they were, what kinds of activities were provided for, all this kind of basic information. They had no such inventory and did not know what existed. My job mainly consisted of going around to schools, getting their old plans -- if any; if not, then going to the tax office and finding out what the size of the site was, how much of it was covered with buildings and what was left, or had developed on the rest of the site. It was almost entirely a fact-gathering job. I learned a great deal. I also learned how to get around the county, learned the towns and their various jurisdictions within the county. [In the Telesis group I also had met Eugene Weston, who asked me to join him in site planning work. I think that Mr. Neutra did the first war housing and Eugene Weston did the second ].

Mel was then working for the Los Angeles County Housing Authority in a public relations capacity. But as a result of the Telesis exhibition he was asked by the Los Angeles Foundation to write a book introducing the subject of planning at the high school level. He then wrote *Cities Are For People*. The whole layout of the book had come out of Telesis. Alvin Lustig, the designer, had

been very active in Telesis group. He and Mel combined to produce a unique book. It was not a regular text but a paper-bound reference book. I had a few landscape jobs which came to me through friends and which I sort of did on the side. But it was not a very rewarding period for me as a landscape architect. The restrictions on public housing were so great that there was no amplitude, no space, for doing any of the things we knew from our study needed to be done. It was so restrictive that it was absolutely minimal.

But what Telesis had really had meant for me was that it influenced my thinking forever afterward. The whole sequence of working at the study of public housing in Europe, the subsequent running of the planning council, the Telesis discussions, putting on the exhibit, all of those things had influenced my thinking. Going back to doing private landscape work did not have very great appeal after that. My social consciousness had grown very much from all of that experience. I know that Telesis influenced my thinking and my teaching, when I got to that. It broadened my outlook on landscape architecture, and my whole understanding of social problems, the relationship of one to the other. Being married to Mel, who had already been a newspaper man, knew the Los Angeles area, had gotten interested in this whole subject through migratory housing, as an editorial writer on the *Hollywood Citizen's News* was the strongest influence. However we had both come to the same conclusion from our previous experience that we wanted to make a trip to Europe to study public housing. We had both read Lewis Mumford's first book, also had been influenced by Catherine Bauer's book on housing,. One mind-expanding idea lead to another, and to the total expression in the Telesis exhibit.

## A GROVE FOR ALL SEASONS

(The Evolution of Willton Woods)

Geraldine Knight Scott, FASLA

The grove we later called Willton Woods was planted in 1944 in response to Dorothy's request for fall color. "Let us have some trees with red, orange or yellow leaves, leaves that tremble and shimmer in the sunlight like those that thrilled me during my eastern college days."

But the climate of Berkeley, California is not like that of Cambridge or New Haven. It was a challenge for me, then a young landscape architect. I bought and planted all of the deciduous trees and shrubs which I had ever seen develop color in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Starting with fifteen seedlings *Liquidambar styraciflua*, one Ginkgo, one Staghorn Sumac and two High Bush Cranberry all in 5 gallon cans, one cool October day I placed them amid the weeds in a random pattern on the northeast facing slope, lush with poison oak. At the bottom of the slope we planted a row of Catalina Cherry to screen the street pavement and enclose the grove I envisioned. I added several California Alders where I thought they could survive on seepage. With one watering line and three hosebibs my clients managed to give each tree one good watering a month during the dry season. And so they all grew though some were stunted, probably by the poison oak eradicator which had been liberally applied.

As the trees grew so did the desire to walk among them. Several years later I was called to stake out some contour paths to be surfaced with red rock.

With the paths clearly staked the grove began to take shape. It became a figure eight, a large oval and a smaller circle with three entrance paths from adjoining properties. The crossing of the paths from the lower to the upper required steps, a slope too steep for comfortable walking on gravel. Smoke bush (*Cotinus coggygia*), and Japanese Anemones were added both to support and to screen the steps. Thus the grove became an oval and a smaller circle filling a rectangular plot sloping down NNW, the sunlight falling across the slope describing a changing shadow pattern of trees as the seasons advance and recede. We then decided which ground covers could establish themselves with the least maintenance, *Vinca minor* in the central area, St. John's Wort on the lowest part of the slope, and California Native Iris and Wild Strawberry above the upper path.

That fall we started planting bulbs; daffodils, including early, middle, and late varieties, scillas, grape hyacinths and ever more daffodils under and around the Ginkgo in the circle at the western end, placed to brighten the darker hues of the Sweet Gums in the fall.

November is generally the month the grove is most vivid, with colors ranging from the warm clear yellow of the Ginkgo to the sharp flames of Sumac, to the rose reds of the Viburnum and the varying reds and burgundies of the seedling Sweet Gums. (Saratoga Horticultural; Foundation had not yet developed its clonal varieties such as Palo Alto most commonly planted today). Some trees grew faster than others while those on the upper south side spread their branches, developing broader heads, an occasional branch reaching out to the adjacent lawn.



This is the month when the teachers from the nearby primary school bring the children in their classes to see "the leaves", to run on the paths, to scuttle in the fallen leaves, squealing their delight. They are told to take not more than a handful and to keep on the paths. Generally, at least one child is pushed off the upper path to roll down the slope, others follow, then pandemonium followed by an orderly retreat.

Most children and their teachers have never seen such a colorful sight. Neighbors and joggers, all around the canyon enjoy the autumn blaze.

Daffodil time brings the children again, but I like best the weeks that follow when the first star-like palest green leaves begin to catch the spring sun.

As the leaves grow, the space becomes filled with an ever deepening green until I can no longer see my neighbor's house. The smoke bush is now too shaded to produce much bloom but it screens the steps at the crossing of the paths, adding another dimension .

Quite by chance, it became my privilege to build on the adjacent lot to the north in 1952. Since that time we have had the very best view of the grove from our living room window, enjoying it in every season. In winter, from December to late February, when the trees are bare, their trunks appear violet and cast their long shadows along the slope toward us. By then, the tall Narcissus leaves, more bulbs added each year, are standing clear of the *Vinca minor* and soon the daffodils begin to raise their trumpets, from white to deepest yellow and some with orange cups. For 6 or 7 weeks they are the show. In late March or early April the first pale green star-like leaves catch the light falling in a steeper angle in their own special way.

### Low Maintenance

I have enjoyed the grove for 37 years through seasons of high rainfall and of drought, raking the increasing excess of leaves from the paths and some from the ground covers. We have cut back the St. John's Wort regularly every second or third year so the daffodils won't have to grow so tall to get the buds up into the sunlight.

We clean out the native iris on the upper slope when the spirit moves us and we give the whole slope about 3 good deep waterings in late summer. The rewards are great for very little effort.

NB

Wilton Woods was given to the City of Berkeley to remain a grove minipark, never to be built upon. The adjacent property owners continue the low maintenance program, enjoying the added amenity of the seasonal change.

NB-2

Willton Woods was the idea of Dorothy Williams and Emily Huntington, neighbors of the Scotts. The name is perhaps a combination of the two women's last name. SBR

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Geraldine Knight Scott

A LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT DISCUSSES TRAINING SINCE 1926,  
AND CHANGES IN THE PROFESSION

Interview Conducted by  
Suzanne B. Riess

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Geraldine Knight Scott

February 3, 1977

Interview held at Mrs. Scott's home, Berkeley

1) Faculty in the Department of Landscape Architecture at Berkeley

Riess: I'd like to start out talking about the department of landscape architecture in the years when you were at the University of California, 1921-26. Professor John W. Gregg was a major figure both for you and for Thomas Church and I've often thought that Gregg's background was so much less design than horticulture that it's amazing that he produced the students that he did.

Scott: Gregg came from Massachusetts Agricultural College at Amherst. I really don't know precisely what his training was, but there were only three or four schools in the country that were offering courses in landscape architecture at the time he was in college. Harvard is where the first course had been set up. Harvard was more design-oriented, certainly, than the Land Grant colleges. Courses were set up in Land Grant colleges because that's where there was some money.

And because landscape architecture's roots in this country really come from England more than they do from continental Europe--England's practitioners came out of a great love of nature--they developed the term "landscape gardening," and that is what moved over to this country and what the first courses were called. It was Frederick Law Olmsted who coined the term "landscape architecture" with Theodora Kimball and [H.V.] Hubbard at Harvard when the first course was set up. Nobody has ever been completely satisfied with the name. Every once in awhile there is a revolt within the profession trying to find another name.

Riess: Even until today?

Scott: Oh, yes. Even more so today than ever before.

Riess: What are the implications of the name that are uncomfortable?

Scott: Well, it isn't architecture. It's much broader, you see. "Fitting land for human use and enjoyment" was the first definition. Well, this is a very broad concept, very much broader than architecture. Landscape architecture is dealing with outside space. Architecture deals with

Scott: structures put upon the land, and we're dealing with the space around structures, in and between. So that the term "architecture" is limiting and the term "landscape" is broad; it's a contradiction in terms. It wasn't gardening--they wanted to get rid of that concept--and put design into the idea, into the name, and so the term "landscape architecture" was coined.

Later, people began realizing that land planning, dealing with the land in a broad sense, was very much broader than designing estates, and that landscape architecture had social and economic and conservation principles imbedded in it. Then the planning professions developed and it was Olmsted who set that up also, Frederick Law Olmsted and Charles Eliot [landscape architect, son of Harvard president] because they found that they couldn't encompass the whole spectrum of studies that needed to be brought together under the term "landscape architecture."\*

Riess: And when the department started here, under Gregg, he brought in...

Scott: That was really before planning got started. The landscape architecture department here was started in 1913. There were people doing so-called "planning" and they were mostly those people who had had their training in landscape architecture, but who broadened out. We still have many of these people who went into public offices and into planning.

Riess: The 1921-1922 directory lists a course in city and town planning, and a course in modern civic design.

Scott: Yes, I took both; they were given either under architecture or under the art department. They didn't amount to much. You might call it "civic design" or something of the sort that I took, and probably Tommy took, too, I have no idea.

If I'm not mistaken, the first planning course was set up in 1923, that's ten years later. It seems to me we ought to talk a little bit about the faculty that Gregg assembled. He came here as an individual and he brought in Ralph T. Stevens. Harry Shepherd was one of the first graduates.

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\*In 1900 F.L. Olmsted and Arthur A. Shurtleff taught the first course at Harvard in Landscape Architecture. James Sturgis Pray in 1903 and H.V. Hubbard in 1906 joined Olmsted and Shurtleff as faculty and in 1906 a graduate School of Landscape Architecture was formed. Hubbard and Pray gave the first course at Harvard in City Planning in 1909. In 1923 Harvard gave a Master's in Landscape Architecture with Special Reference to City Planning and later in that decade began developing a separate School of City Planning. S.R.

Riess: Yes, Shepherd was the first graduate in 1914.

Scott: Shepherd graduated in agriculture and his background was primarily horticulture. Here's a picture of him I thought was kind of interesting.

Riess: Oh, yes.

Scott: They brought in Miss Jones to teach plants. Katherine D. Jones was a very unusual person. Here's a booklet written by her. She was a plants person and a very famous one in her day. There were two well-known Katherines, Kate Sessions in San Diego, and Katherine B. Jones here. And I believe they had both graduated in agricultural or horticultural courses here at Berkeley. Katie Jones was never made more than an instructor, which was a fine piece of discrimination because she really was the most informed person on the faculty I would say. She wasn't design-oriented at all. She taught the courses in plants, plant identification, all about plants. It was a very large part of the curriculum at that time.

Riess: Why was she kept back?

Scott: I don't know. I know that when she was about to retire, Shepherd did everything he could to get her made an assistant professor, so that her retirement would be adequate to live on. And he did not succeed. Whether she hadn't published enough, or what I don't know.

She was probably the only woman teaching in the agricultural college. She was a timid, shy person. She knew her subject and that's all. She was a character. Her teaching methods were not college level--a great deal of it was by rote and annoyed all of us, and yet we learned plants as nobody since has.

Riess: What kind of character was she?

Scott: Well, she was a Victorian lady. She was a maiden-lady and she wore long skirts that touched the ground. She wore a hat all the time; nobody had ever seen her without a hat. I invited her to my sorority one time for Sunday brunch wanting to see if she'd come without her hat, but she did not. She wore it all the time. She was very small, but when she took us on field trips she could out-walk any of us. She was vigorous and ardent. She always wore cotton gloves. She carried what amounted to a carpet-bag, a big bag, in which she had notebooks, pencils for everybody, little slips of paper, plant lists, and a little food because our classes were four hours long and she insisted you needed a little sustenance in the middle of that period.

Riess: She would make herself responsible for that?

Scott: No. She would do it once and then each person in the class was to take a turn. When it was her turn, she brought raisins. There were four raisins per person and she would put them out on a little paper plate that she had and pass them to us. It was so funny, we would all wink at each other when she'd say, "Take lots, take two." [Laughter] And then there'd be a second round and we got two more raisins. She was very frugal.

Riess: Well, this one woman in the field would be a strange model for women landscape architects.

Scott: [Laughter] Well, she was a model to work against I would say. She used to walk way ahead of us for instance, and put little papers on the trees on the campus with numbers. And that was our examination. We had to go by and put down the names for each number. Then she would come around to each of us and say, "Fred Barlow did better than you did on that quiz." [Laughter]

Riess: A few more raisins for Fred.

Scott: A little competition was part of her method. And of course we did lots of teasing of her. She was the most devoted teacher I ever had in my life, there's no question about it.

Riess: Was she here when Tommy was here?

Scott: Oh, yes. You see, Tommy was here ahead of me. Tommy graduated before I came into the department, he's four years ahead of me.

Riess: So Tommy would have had Gregg and Miss Jones and Harry Shepherd. And what about [C.L.] Flint?

Scott: Yes, Flint taught construction. I would say the less said about him, the better. He was the poorest professor I ever had. He didn't have knowledge and we all knew it.

Riess: So if Flint was short in his knowledge, then where else did you get the engineering?

Scott: We didn't.

Riess: You didn't at all.

Scott: No, we didn't, unless we went on to graduate school, which most of the people who really went into practice did. Tommy went to Harvard, I went to Cornell, knowing that I hadn't received adequate training here. But it wasn't entirely the fault of the instructors. A four-year course is



Scott: not sufficient, and especially when they allotted 16 units of it to learning plants; there wasn't enough design sequence instruction. The design faculty was Gregg and an occasional somebody else he brought in. And Mr. Flint giving a criticism on whether the path was right; it was feeble. That's why we went on to graduate school. I mean two years is not enough design.

There were very good people in my class, Bob [Robert] Stryker; this was a time when there were veterans and Bob Stryker was brilliant and quite as capable as Tommy Church in any and every way.

Riess: And did he go on?

Scott: He went on to Harvard. He won a traveling fellowship just as Tommy did.

Riess: Oh, that's interesting, because I had begun to get the picture that Tommy was the only one who had sort of upped and gone on. Who was advising Tommy and Bob Stryker and you? How did you all know what the next steps were?

Scott: Gregg encouraged us to go on. He was not able to set up a graduate program. At that time he was just barely keeping an undergraduate program going. He didn't have the faculty, he didn't have the money. He was trying all the time to get his department out of agriculture and allied with architecture.

Riess: Oh, he was?

Scott: Always. But he didn't have very much clout on this campus. He was a peculiar character, Gregg. A very unhappy man. He had problems at home. He had one son who was very capable, and one that was not, and this was a great care, a problem.

Gregg I always thought was a disillusioned idealist. It showed in his face. Everything about him showed that he was a disillusioned person, that he had had great aspirations and he had not been able to achieve what he wanted to achieve.

Riess: I think too if there were any things he had wanted to do as a landscape architect he would have been overshadowed on the campus by John Galen Howard in the same places where he might have been able to do something.

Scott: Right. He didn't make the right kinds of connections on the campus. Professor [Eugen] Neuhaus in the art department was a friend of his; it was Neuhaus who gave the course in Civic Art, for instance, Civic Architecture. But it was obvious that Gregg did not carry very much weight in the Academic Senate or in campus committees. He was never able to make this connection strong.

Scott: However, he did get enough recognition to put into his curriculum a requirement for courses in architecture. We all had to take Architecture I, II, and III, which were descriptive geometry, shades and shadows, and perspective drawing, which were taught in architecture. Landscape students did well enough, apparently, in all of those required courses. We didn't take any architectural design, nothing was required and we had so many requirements that we couldn't really elect to take any in that four-year course. I took extra units all the time I was here. I knew perfectly well that I didn't have enough design and I right away determined that I would go on to graduate school.

## 2) Gardens in California: The Summer Trips, Mid 1920s

Riess: Were there other landscape architects who came back and addressed the students so that you got a sense of what was out there, what the possibilities of the profession were?

Scott: No, but we were encouraged to go to meetings of the American Society of Landscape Architects. Gregg was a member. Practitioners came to the department; we read the Quarterly; we knew what the profession consisted of.

Riess: Well, who were the landscape architects you might have emulated?

Scott: I think I should talk a little bit more about the summer trips. One of the requirements was a six-week summer trip, which Gregg and Shepherd and Katie Jones conducted.

Riess: Was "Katie" how she was thought of, or how she was referred to?

Scott: Always we called her "Katie" Jones.)

We went all over the state of California. We saw all of the good existing gardens in the state. We went as far south as San Diego and north to Sacramento, we started in Sacramento and down through the valley and so on. We went to nurseries, to estates, to parks, and saw all of the then-practicing people in the state of California.

Riess: You met them?

Scott: We met them, we saw their work, we went to their offices, so that by the time we graduated we certainly knew what was going on in California.

Riess: That was two summers?

Scott: One summer, one six-week trip. With a class of six people, as there were in my class, and I think there were four in Tommy's, it's quite easy to do this. For three professors to take four or six students on a trip meant packing a terrific amount into every single day. Now they still have summer trips, but they're one week, two weeks, and classes are thirty people, so you can't begin to cover what we did in one summer.

Riess: Well, it sounds like it easily could be the most influential thing in the two-year major subject period.

Scott: I think it was exceedingly valuable. I still have my photographs; they're not very good. I wasn't good at camera-work then, but we all had cameras, we sketched, we made notes, we produced a notebook out of that summer, it was either a four or six-unit course and we worked very hard. And got a great deal out of it.

Riess: And do you remember the contacts with the landscape architects?

Scott: Ralph Stevens was then down in Santa Barbara. There were a number of very outstanding [practitioners] in that area who were basically landscape gardeners in the English tradition, as most everybody at that time was. They were doing large and interesting gardens and estates. Some of these estates had been designed by eastern landscape architects who had been brought out to California by owners to design them. Harland Bartholomew & Associates of St. Louis designed many California estates.

Riess: How about Fletcher Steele?

Scott: Fletcher Steele. Yes.

Riess: Is that a western name or an eastern?

Scott: Well, they all came from the east. Fletcher Steele, Cook and Hall in Los Angeles, later Cook, Hall, and Cornell, who were doing subdivision work already. There was a man in San Diego, Ralph Diggs, whose name comes to me, I haven't thought of him for years. I know when I struck him for a job much later, he said, "Absurd." He "couldn't possibly" have a woman in his office and that it was "absolutely ridiculous" for me to have thought of applying.

Riess: Did you ever offer yourself as somebody who was willing to answer the phone and do all those things too?

Scott: No, I did not. I refused to learn to type so that I could not be made a secretary, which was what was happening to some other women.

Scott: We saw Katherine Bashford at that time; we saw probably a garden or two of hers.

Riess: She was a graduate?

Scott: I don't think so. I think she came from the east, but I'm not certain.

Riess: Are the gardens you saw on the summer trips gardens that you had seen in plan before?

Scott: No, they were not.

Riess: When you studied design with Gregg, was it mostly European?

Scott: Well, yes and no. We went around to see sites and did little designs for actual pieces of property. The Berkeley fire had occurred; we took burned-out sites and tried to make something of them, pretty practical kind of thing. We did historical studies, but we didn't necessarily try to emulate them. We tried to solve the problem of a client's needs.

Riess: How about the [Duncan] McDuffie garden in Berkeley? Was that in existence then?

Scott: The McDuffie garden existed and was one that we frequently went to see. Now that had been designed by Harland Bartholomew & Associates. As I said, they sent their representatives out to design a number of estates in California. The same man did the Livermore garden in Marin county, which I later worked on and modified in certain ways.

Riess: Bruce Porter did the garden down at "Filoli."

Scott: Yes. That was mainly supervised by the owner [William B.] Bourn, who was a very educated man. Mr. Bourn had one very fine gardener who was of the same order of intelligence and experience as John McLaren at Golden Gate Park to carry out the plan. Mr. Bourn was partially paralyzed. He went around the property in a wheelchair and directed much of the work.

Riess: Amazing. And did he know about all the drainage things that I think of landscape architects having to know?

Scott: Oh, this very fine Scotch gardener was a practical man in land management. He understood drainage.

ROBERT STOCKTON STRYKER  
MEMORIAL LOAN FUND  
IN LANDSCAPE DESIGN  
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA  
BERKELEY



**Robert Stockton Stryker**, a brilliant student of Landscape Architecture, educator, successful practitioner, and a lovable character, graduated from the University of California in 1926, winning the LeConte Fellowship to Harvard University, where he continued his studies at the Graduate School of Landscape Architecture leading to the degree of Master of Landscape Architecture. Graduating from Harvard with honors, he was awarded the Sheldon Traveling Fellowship for travel and study in European countries. Upon his return he became a member of the faculty of the graduate school at Harvard. He was associated with many important landscape projects and was rapidly making a name for himself in his chosen professional field when, due to overwork, he contracted an illness culminating in his death.

Alumni and friends desirous of honoring his memory are now establishing in his name a loan fund for worthy undergraduate, major students in Landscape Design at the University of California at Berkeley. The fund to be administered by the University under the usual rules and regulations. It is hoped that those who knew him well, Alumni, and friends of the art of landscape architecture, will want to contribute generously. You are asked to respond to this appeal at your earliest convenience. All contributions, no matter how small, will be gratefully acknowledged by the Pacific Coast Chapter of The American Society of Landscape Architects and the Landscape Design Club of the University of California as sponsors.



Scott: He must have worked for Katherine Bashford at least the summer before he went to Harvard. I know he worked for her a little while in southern California and that could have been the summer before he went to Harvard.

Riess: I'm really taken with this idea that four out of seven awards were won in Berkeley. I never knew that the landscape architecture department here was really so substantial. To think Gregg won first and second awards in an ASLA contest.

Scott: Well, if you go back to the ASLA quarterlies--I've given all mine away to the University of Washington in Seattle, so I don't have the old file--but this kind of thing shows up in history.

Riess: I know, and I'm not doing that kind of an historic study but I guess I've always thought that the department was really pulling itself up madly by its bootstraps.

Scott: Well, Gregg just didn't have the personality, I think, to develop a force within the faculty of this University. And besides, there's always been a cleavage between, or there was up until the conservation movement and the ecological studies developed, there was a tremendous cleavage between what went on at a Land Grant based-campus, and the professions or the schools of architecture, medicine, so on. The endowed schools looked down on them and still do. At Cornell this attitude is still very, very pronounced where you have privately endowed schools on the same campus with state endowed schools. I served on the Advisory Council of the School of Architecture, Environmental Art and Planning at Cornell for three years and found this attitude still persisting.

#### 4) The Training at Berkeley

Scott: What kind of a person Gregg was in his days, I don't know. I know that he had the decency to tell me before I went to Cornell--I couldn't get into Harvard, they wouldn't take a woman, so the next place I elected to go was Cornell--before I left he called me in and said, "Now, my arch-enemy is head of the department at Cornell and he will give you a bad time." Which he did.

Riess: How did Gregg ever acquire an arch-enemy?

Scott: Well, I don't know. These two men hated each other. They'd both been at college together, you see, at Massachusetts Aggie. E. Gorton Davis at Cornell hated Gregg, and Gregg hated Davis. It became clear the minute I got there.

Riess: Were you reasonably well-prepared for Cornell in comparison with other graduate students?

Scott: Well, that's a story in itself.

Riess: What would you guess Tommy's experience would have been coming from Berkeley to Harvard?

Scott: Well, I don't think that he would have had any trouble because he had very great facility with drawing and a great deal of charm as a person. Even as a very young person he had a natural ebullience and humor. I don't think he would have had any trouble at all.

Riess: Had anyone preceded him from Berkeley to Harvard?

Scott: Not that I know of.

Riess: Of that list of people--F.B. Kennedy, Herbert Langhorn, Tommy Vint, Katherine Williams...

Scott: Tommy Vint I think possibly went to Harvard. He went into the national Park Service. He might have gone to Harvard, I'm not sure.

Riess: Budd Smith, Opal Waters, Milton Wolfe.

Scott: I don't know any of those names.

Riess: Lots of women, many women in those early days.

Scott: But not many of them graduated I think. They went for a year or two.

Riess: Carol Wagner; here's another man, Victor Anderson.

Scott: Victor Anderson I know. He did some quite good work.

Riess: Harry Newton, Jesse Tebbe, Harold Schroeder. You think maybe of all of that list, the only one that might have gone to Harvard also, then, would have been Tommy Vint.

Scott: Yes. It's the only name that rings any bell in that group.

Riess: Did Gregg make you feel that as a woman you could be at the top?

Scott: No, he didn't ever question that. Gregg had certain prejudices. One very strong one against Japanese and the Japanese in California, but otherwise I didn't feel that he was prejudiced. He'd had many girls in the department and many older women, I didn't feel that. But he



Scott: hadn't done anything to help Miss Jones get ahead in his own department; that's the only evidence I have there that might have had some prejudice.

He used to tell me that I'd have a bad time. That was kind of a fatherly warning that it wasn't going to be easy. But afterall, Miss Bashford was practicing in southern California successfully, Florence Yock and Lucille Council, Ellen Shipman in New York, there were plenty of women practicing at that time. They were early models.

Riess: Harvard didn't want to train them?

Scott: They wouldn't take girls in and when I applied for jobs in state or county offices they wouldn't consider hiring me. In fact, I was the first woman employed in Los Angeles county and that was during the Second World War. The war is the only reason they took me into the office. They simply couldn't get any men, so they had to change the regulations because their civil service jobs were only open to men.

Riess: What sort of cultural history, or aesthetics, or what general training was given students so that you were well-rounded people who could design a garden within some sort of context of what else was beautiful in the world?

Scott: We had a very good course in history of landscape architecture; it was given by Gregg. He knew landscape history. That was an excellent course. We also took history of architecture in architecture, an elective. I took it. I'd had a very good course in history of art in high school, an excellent one, I still think the best; I've had three and I think it was the best. It happened to be a person who was superior and that's all, had had a very good art background.\*

I had come out of an art course in high school, a major in art, and I expected to go into a design profession here. I was absolutely flabbergasted when I found landscape design was in agriculture. I very much resented having to take all of the agricultural sciences, which I'm sure Tommy resented, too. But we did take them, and in the long run it has paid off, you see. But we had to take all of the ag sciences, which meant botany, zoology, bacteriology, chemistry, soil technology, forestry, taxonomy, genetics.

Riess: Then you had to go and learn all of the engineering and all of the construction?

Scott: Yes, we took some of that--well, agricultural engineering we had, but the construction was very meager. But at Cornell I had very good instruction in construction. I personally was always interested in

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\*See Jaffe interview.

Scott: construction from the time I was a child. I'd been fascinated by construction so that I've always been the one female watching construction projects from the time I was five years old. I found out how to do things.

Riess: So when you were through school, you knew that area. You didn't really have to apprentice yourself then?

Scott: Of course, in a way I was very fortunate, after working for Gregg and Shepherd, in going to work for A.E. Hansen in southern California. He was really a promoter and not a designer at all, but he had his own construction company. He did some of the biggest jobs in southern California. He was basically a tree mover. We didn't bother to make working drawings. We didn't have to because he had his own construction crew. You just went out on the job and told them how to do it. His head designer was an architect who had also won the Prix de Rome, and he was a person I really learned the most from. I had a year and a half there. When the stock market crash came, that's where I was working. We were working on probably forty of the biggest jobs in southern California. I had gone directly into this job and had to learn to supervise right away.

Riess: I guess Tommy learned the construction thing on the job too.

Scott: Well, we all had to. There were no landscape contractors as I think I mentioned to you before. You had to develop your own construction crew and go on learning all the time.

Riess: Was Olmsted always viewed as the greatest landscape architect?

Scott: Olmsted is unique. We've never had a single practitioner that was as broad a person as Olmsted. He's not only the father of the profession, but he's been our ideal. And nobody yet has touched him. He was a poet, he was an excellent writer, he had a tremendous social consciousness; he had knowledge of the law, he set up the first sanitary commission in this country that later became the Red Cross. He was a man of such broad interests; we have nobody to compare with him. We could roll twenty landscape architects together today and they wouldn't equal one Olmsted. Nobody has shown that kind of breadth, in my opinion. He should be known as one of the great Americans.

We're trying to make his home and office a national historic landmark. All of his letters and reports are in the Smithsonian now. It's very belatedly that he's coming to be recognized as one of the great early Americans. There's no landscape architect coming out of any school today that isn't well aware of how broad Olmsted was. Several biographies of Olmsted had been published in the last few years.

Scott: You were asking if I felt I had a broad basic education here. Well, no, I didn't. Not only was design lacking, but there were very few electives that one could take out of the department. It was a very narrow curriculum. My own background is quite deficient in history, in literature. The University requirements included one year of English, and American History, and I had about two other electives.

I took a course from [Frederick J.] Teggert, which was one of the best courses I ever had here; it was called The Idea of Progress. I was fascinated by it. It was an eye-opener, marvelous, a real mind-expander! And I was so excited about it, that I wanted to go on and take another, but Gregg wouldn't let me. He said, "It's a waste of time." I should apply myself to the profession. He was my advisor.

Riess: I should think that would be very hampering.

Scott: It was. I knew all the time that this course was not adequate and everybody--Garrett Eckbo, Corwin Mocine, Fran Violich--everybody that came along later, that wanted to advance, knew that they had to get more training than they got here at Berkeley.

Riess: Well, more training and also more general background.

Scott: Right, broader.

Riess: I wonder how Gregg viewed Tommy.

Scott: Oh, he was very proud of him, he was very proud of him. He took pride that he'd come out of his school.

Riess: Wouldn't Gregg have thought that Tommy was going off in rash new directions?

Scott: I don't think so. He would have thought of Tommy as realizing his own dream.

Riess: Gregg's own dream?

Scott: Yes.

Riess: Gee, Gregg is becoming sort of a tragic figure.

Scott: Oh, he always was to me. His face showed it. A very sad man. A very unhappy man. He put up little maxims all over the wall. One of them was from Daniel Burnham: "Let your imagination revel in magnificent fancies, but discipline them for their perfect realization..." There were things like this in the drafting room and his office. He had pictures of Olmsted and pictures of Daniel Burnham and pictures of several of the landscape architects in England on the walls. These were his heroes.

Scott: I think Gregg was trying very hard probably to erase the idea of himself as a plantsman and as a horticultural person. He thought of himself as a well-equipped landscape architect. He did a number of estates here on the Peninsula. The Moore estate, which I have a few pictures of, was quite acceptable. It was in the Spanish tradition, as most places of that time were. The detail of it is quite good. It isn't one of the great estates, but how do we know what the clients ask for, what they were willing to pay for.

I don't think anyone ever thought of him as a great designer, but he certainly was adequately trained and capable enough. Gregg's own place was kind of a romantic landscape. [705 The Alameda, Berkeley]

#### 5) Tommy Church, Planting the Gardens

Riess: It seems odd to me that Tommy is sometimes spoken of as being "old-fashioned" and loving gardens, as if there were a special trait. I would have always thought that that would be why people got into the profession in the first place.

Scott: Well, I think it was. Tommy is one of the few practitioners who's been practicing for a long time who has used plants well, who has liked them, and never played down that part of landscape design. He has realized that plants were a part of his design material and he has used them very well.

Courses in universities, in order to get in more design, and some economics, sociology, broader courses, had to drop off something. And what they dropped off was the teaching of plants. Now students learn here maybe 100 plants, whereas Tommy and I probably learned 2,000.

Riess: You're saying that makes sense because the profession has tried to rid itself of the "pansy planter" image.

Scott: Right. You can find all kinds of references, all the way through the literature, of people countering a statement of being called a "pansy planter," assuring people that "I do very much more than plant pansies, and plants are not my main concern," that planting is less than 20 percent of a total landscape project, etc. There's a lot of evidence, and it is true, planting is a small portion of landscape design. But it's the visible portion, it's the thing that makes the great visual impact and makes people like gardens.

In order to use your materials well, you have to like them. Tommy knows them, likes them. He's always gone around to nurseries and put on a hold on the best specimens, much to my consternation. I go around to

Scott: do the same thing and Tommy's already got a "hold" tag on a specimen I'd like to have. [Laughter] We've joshed about this a lot. But all of us who really learned our plants like them and use them rather well.

Riess: So the landscape architects who say, "Well, plants aren't really important anyway" are really reflecting their lack of information about them.

Scott: Right. And they have in their offices, if they employed a woman, given her the job of making the planting plans. It requires detailed knowledge of plants to use them, to specify them.

There's a tremendous amount of detail in landscape architecture. And it's very hard for one person to know it all. As an office develops, you tend to get somebody who's good in construction, and somebody else who is good in planting, and so on. I don't think that the girls have the option. "You know plants?" They start them right in doing planting plans and they seldom get out of that niche in an office.

Now there are big offices like Skidmore, Owings and Merrill which are architectural firms that take on a landscape architect. If it's a woman what they have her do is the planting plan for the total site. They seldom have her do anything else. And this is very common.

Tommy had several women working for him at various times and they did planting plans. They also supervised planting. But he liked plants and he took them [employees] to nurseries and he trained them to see plants his way so that they really were carrying out his desire, he wasn't just shunting them off. But you'd have to ask Tommy whether he felt that women had an aptitude for it. From teaching planting design, I don't think so. I've had fellows that I thought had far more sensitivity and aptitude for doing planting design than the girls. Some of the girls didn't have any special feeling for plants as design materials.

Riess: Don't the girls object to that narrow view?

Scott: It depends on the person. Some of them wanted a full, broad spectrum of kinds of practice or experience in an office. And they'd leave that office and try another one. Today many of them are getting into other jobs, but I'm talking about this big period from the Second World War to within the last ten years, say, when that was true.

Now you've got lots of girls working in public offices that are doing environmental impact studies and doing the writing, because now they give the girls the writing of the reports to do.

Riess: That's interesting. I guess you'd begin to wonder whether landscape architects weren't just frustrated architects then.

Scott: Well, that's a common statement. [Laughter] I'll try to make the case again. A landscape architect is dealing with space and very broad spaces. Those landscape architects who are capable of getting the big jobs are working on whole watersheds. They're working on huge campus designs and layouts for big institutions of various sorts. This is what a landscape architect wants to work on, it's what Olmsted worked on. It's the bigger field.

If you are tooled up in your thinking or in your office to handle this kind of a project, you really can't bother with choosing the precise little plants for Mrs. Jones' garden, unless you're a genius and can handle both scales of design. It's like designing jewelry on one hand and a huge cathedral on the other. They're such different scales. They're all part of the process.

Now a good many young people think they only want to design residential gardens. It's a reaction to the very large scale of some projects. There are always people who really want to work at the residential design level. And the courses today are not offering that. Some can't get what they want in the University because the universities, and certainly Berkeley precisely, is going into regional design more and more, and urban design, design within the urban context, each having different kinds of special problems.

Riess: I gathered in talking with Floyd Gerow that Tommy did all the design first and then the planting thinking came after the construction work was finished. He would walk around and very skillfully but very rapidly dispose of that.

Scott: Well, of course I've never been on the job with Tommy. Floyd would know more about how he worked than I would. Early designers in England and in the east, all worked that way. If you're not putting a job out to bid, you can work that way. But if you're putting it out to bid, it's got to all be on paper and specified very clearly. Tommy worked directly with Floyd; he didn't have to put jobs out to bid, so that he could work that way. He probably did. Because, as I said, he went around to nurseries and tagged good specimens and knew what he could draw from for any particular job.

Riess: Well, when you put something out to bid, though, does the bid go also to a nursery man?

Scott: Oh, indeed.

Riess: I see.

Scott: It's specified down to the last number of ground cover plants that have to go in.

Riess: So that's why you would have to have a person in the office doing all of that sort of detail.

Scott: Yes, it's a very detailed job to do a planting plan, but there's an awful lot of detail to construction and to irrigation and to all parts of landscape work. When I worked for A.E. Hansen in Los Angeles, we didn't have to specify anything. I had to learn how to write specifications later on.

Tommy avoided a lot of that detail. However, when Tommy worked for the universities, as he did, for all the campuses, he was an advisor most of the time, but there were instances where he had to produce plans and detailed specifications. He worked on many kinds of big institutions. He did a big place in the east, General Motors. But any big job or one outside of California had to be specified and Tommy employed very capable people in his office who could do those things.

The planting in institutions tends to be very much simpler than it does on a home garden. Fewer species are used, because people aren't seeing the areas so often. A home garden is observed every day. It has to be interesting over a long period of time.

Now, I would say here in passing that Tommy tended to become simpler and simpler in his plantings, because that makes maintenance simpler. If you use fewer varieties, you have fewer complications in maintenance. Also the degree of complexity depends on the kind of client one has.

Tommy had many clients who were wealthy, had growing families, had many interests, who traveled a lot, who wanted their places to look very nice but didn't want to spend a lot of time on maintenance. And you can't get good gardeners; in fact we have fewer and fewer trained gardeners in this country. Everything tended to make his planting plans simpler. Very good, but simple.

Quite a few of his clients came to me to enrich his plantings later. This is not to play them down. The first time this happened, I was very embarrassed and I said, "I can't touch one of Tommy's jobs." This was maybe five, ten years afterward.

They said, "Well, it's gotten kind of dull to me. I'd like you to make it more interesting."

I said, "Why don't you go back to Tommy?"

Scott: "Well, Tommy, he's too busy or he won't do it now."

The first time that happened to me I called Tommy and said--I like Tommy, he's a friend--I said, "Tommy, I'm embarrassed."

Tommy said, "Oh, forget it. Go ahead and do it." He said, "I always like what you do. I knew there wouldn't be any conflict. Just go ahead and do it." And after talking to him a time or two on particular places, I'd go ahead and do the revising if I liked the person and really wanted to work with them.

I think David Streatfield asked me, he said, "Well, did you ever want to change the whole garden the way most people do? They don't like this."\* And I said, "No, never. Tommy and I were in perfect accord. I would never have the slightest desire to change one of the main lines of anything he did. No, we came out of the same tradition, we worked in the same way." No conflict whatsoever.

#### 6) The Critical Vacuum

Riess: I am certainly not surprised that one would change, and change one's ideas about planting. How can you assume that at the age twenty-two or twenty-three that you have any kind of real taste at all anyway; I think that develops and is a product of middle years rather than early years.

Scott: Right. And young clients are busy with children who can't give a great deal of time to their gardens. Others start with a lot of interest in the garden and then lose it. They become interested in many other things.

Riess: And how about the professionals' taste? Don't you think it changes?

Scott: Oh, it changes very much, sure. It matures, and you learn so much more about plants. They're living, they're complex, you learn much more about micro-climate, how to deal with it, what's going to be successful, what isn't, out of experience. In your own garden you have to change, things die out, it's not through any fault, it's the nature of some plants to be short-lived, but you don't necessarily want to replace the one that dies. You want something similar but different--more bloom or less shade perhaps.

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\*David C. Streatfield, Assistant Professor, University of Washington, Department of Landscape Architecture.



Scott: It concerns me that since we do not teach visual perception in our schools most people are visually illiterate so they are not critical of executed designs. We don't have any body of landscape criticism, there's not one that criticizes landscape jobs the way a play or a painting is criticized.

Riess: I read an article by you that called it a profession without a voice.

Scott: We're not subjected to criticism. When a garden is ready and pictures are taken of it, which appear in magazines all over the country or books, ipso facto it must be good; nobody goes back to look at it and evaluate it later. They're beginning to go back now, just beginning to make user studies, to get criticism of a place after its done, ten years later, whether it really worked or not.

Houses are criticized somewhat, not a lot. The same thing [deficiency of criticism] obtains for architecture. Criticism, judgment, is passed on buildings after they're done, much more than it is on landscape, but they're both deficient in critical appraisal in my opinion.

Riess: Don't you think that the client gets more involved in the landscape, so that after ten years as a client, your own identity would be really--

Scott: Well, I think this depends on whether you're thinking of an individual client or a corporate client and a lot of bigger projects are corporate clients you're dealing with--school boards, corporations, park boards, etc.

The value of criticism is to educate a public, it seems to me, to understand what is within the public domain. The private garden is something else again and I wasn't really thinking of the private garden.

Riess: I guess that's what I think of mostly in relation to Tommy.

Scott: Well, he's done a good many plans that are public; however, not anything like the number of public works that Garrett Eckbo or Eckbo, Royston and Williams have done. I think even I have landscaped more schools and professional buildings than he has. However, he's designed a good many campus layouts which I have not.

Riess: Can you recall any work of his that's ever been controversial?

Scott: Not that I know of. On the campus, of course, we had big fights over things happening on this campus and they probably do on the Stanford campus. But that's an internal fight because of the way the faculty committees are organized. You have a campus planning committee that doesn't include any landscape architects, or architects. The campus sets up very strange committees.

Riess: It has had, or did have Doug Baylis as a consulting, a regular consulting architect, and Church, didn't it?

Scott: Doug was a consultant for awhile; of course Tommy employed Allen Ribera as his liaison with the campus for a long time.

Riess: Was this a case of what you were talking about before, the landscape architect seen as the pansy-planter and probably not paid attention to in campus planning? Even though they were given token place.

Scott: Well, it's this feeling that the architect is superior.

## 7) The Architects and the Engineers

Scott: I've often referred to the architects as the "arrogant profession." Architects are an exceedingly arrogant group of people. They really feel that [laughing] they have the only keys to design. And they're very loathe to accept landscape architects.

Now in the School of Environmental Design, the cleavage is probably even more pronounced than it was many years ago. Although planning, architecture and landscape are in the same building and should be getting to know each other better, architects are not our best friends. Many think there's no need for a landscape architect except to put plants around their buildings.

Riess: So if there were to be terraces and levels, they would also take care of drawing and specifying them also.

Scott: Now you're really on a subject. Architects work with engineers. And engineers will say that they want a terrace and they want it to "look level." Nothing can be level and drain. Drainage is the biggest problem in landscape architecture. The engineer drains to too fine a tolerance which in practice often doesn't work. That's one of the biggest battles we have with architects all the time. And I've worked on many schools which are big layouts.

When the architect brings me into the job, he has a tentative layout, and tentative grades set up, and I start right in and go over the grading and say, "It won't work."

"Our engineer says it will work. Who are you?"

He says, "A tenth of an inch to the foot," I say, "A quarter of an inch to the foot," on play fields, because we don't get good enough workmanship.

Scott: This battle goes on all the time. Neither architects nor engineers are our friends. We have a bad time. Right now the engineers are trying to take our license away from us. They snipe at landscape architects all the time. And we may lose our licensing in the state of California; we're battling it right now.

Riess: That's a retrogressive step.

Scott: Yes. We were the first state in the Union to get licensing, been copied by thirty-eight states, and we're about to lose it. Engineers don't want us to do irrigation, or any kind of retaining walls, etc., want that all to be done by engineers. This makes landscape architecture cost more if you have to employ these consultants for things you could do yourself.

Riess: Very interesting. Well, landscape architecture is really not at all well settled in. It sounds like the landscape construction field isn't well settled in, either, what with the unions always making that difficult.

Scott: It's becoming a very much more complex profession all the time. The profession that we're more closely allied to are the planners.

As planners are moving into economic and social planning, realizing that the implications of their broad planning processes have to be thought of in much more human terms than they were, that you can't impose a plan involving thousands of people without consulting those people, they're employing sociologists and lots of people to help them, and they're broadening out all of their courses in those directions, economic, political, and social. As they move out of physical planning, landscape architecture is moving into physical planning.

As I've told you, it was Olmsted who set up both professions. Planning is much closer than architecture, and another reason why the term "landscape architecture" is a curious contradiction in terms. Really one makes personal friends with some architects he can work with, so the generalization can't be always applied, certainly. But the planners and landscape architects have much more understanding of each other's problems, than architects or engineers and landscape architects.

Now Tommy established very good rapport with many architects, and particularly with Wurster, Bernardi, and Emmons right there in the same building. Practically did most everything that they did, and they must have called him in to set the grades. He established that kind of rapport. They had separate offices, one floor separated, so they could work back and forth easily.

Riess: In fact, where do you think he would have gone without Wurster?

Scott: Oh, he would have made some other friends. Hervey Parke Clark was another one of his friends, although Hervey Parke Clark never produced as much or became as influential as Wurster. But Tommy had a great ability to work with people, not only clients, but with architects and engineers. He could disagree with them pleasantly. He could maintain a relationship, he was a persuasive person.

Riess: Right. So despite all these issues, his personality...

Scott: Yes, his personality would have triumphed, I think. Some other architect would have been his main sponsor.

#### 8) Tommy Church's Friends and Clients

Riess: You know, whenever you refer to Tommy you smile. [Laughter] He really must be absolutely amazing.

Scott: Well, that's curious. Tommy is a charming person, that's all. I never had a great deal to do with him, but he had charm and he was amusing, always amusing.

Tommy was witty. I'll give you an instance. We had a big fight on the campus over one of his plantings in which I protested. Plans were brought in and I insisted on there being a discussion and changing some of the plants. Wurster opened the meeting by praising Tommy, saying "I've worked with Tommy all these years and I respect his judgment," and so on and on. As he went on Tommy turned around and said, "That's big of you, Bill, but you remember what happened on another building here? [Laughter] "When you objected to my plan." And everybody laughed.

The meeting was very tense up to that point because Tommy knew we were all there to put him on the spot, we didn't like what he was doing, but he broke the tension. Then everybody laughed and we got out the plans and looked at them and Tommy said, "Well, maybe you're right. I don't mind changing that, but I'll hold for this." And the compromises were worked out. But only Tommy could do this.

Riess: I should think Tommy's great success would have made for a good deal of envy and resentment.

Scott: I think it might have if he hadn't had charm and the ability to laugh and be a generous-minded person. Tommy has had a tremendous amount of publicity, in every national magazine; every month another garden by Tommy Church. But Tommy, if I occasionally got something in, Tommy would write me a note. He found time to do things like this, you know. He was a generous-minded person.

Scott: They gave him a seventieth birthday party; it was the jolliest party I ever went to. They called up from his office, his secretary, whoever was working in the office said, "Tommy's going to be seventy. Don't you think we ought to throw a birthday party for him?"

Why, everybody came for miles around, every contractor and architect, and they carried Wurster up in his chair. (He was already very ill.)

They knew Tommy would be away. He was on a job supervising down the Peninsula. He came back and here was this mob in the office. It wasn't precisely on his birthday, but a day or two before maybe, but it didn't make any difference. Tommy said, "Gee, what a great idea! Why didn't I think of it?" [Laughter] It was so typical you know.

Imogen Cunningham was there, oh, everybody was there. It was a marvelous party, best party I ever went to in my life.

Everybody had pleasant enough relations with Tommy. I've never heard anybody that did work for him say they didn't like him or anything. They'd leave the office because he didn't put their name on jobs perhaps. He remained Tommy Church and when it was time for them to go out for themselves, they went. But they didn't leave because they resented Tommy, really.

Riess: And then, as you said before, he got on very well with his clients. Would he get along with just any client or did he pick and choose his clients?

Scott: Well, I don't know whether I told you this. I used to call Tommy and ask him all kinds of questions...

You get all kinds of people; you don't know, when you're called up by somebody, anything about them. They maybe already own a house on a piece of property and they call you and you go there and you find a woman who is a nervous wreck, who is a dope, or an alcoholic, or who is just cantankerous one way or another. All kinds of things happen. Or you start working for somebody and you find you can't work with them. And this is one of the big headaches in landscape architecture is that unless you have a natural aptitude, you find yourself sort of holding hands with some woman who says she wants to tell you all about her troubles with her husband or her family. You get into a pretty intimate situation with people.

In any case, I had a whole series of really difficult clients one time and I called Tommy and I said, "Tommy, what do you do when you get somebody you just can't work with?"

Scott: He said, "Well, I just call them up and tell them 'I'm not your landscape architect.'"

And I said, "But, Tommy, do you call them up or do you have your secretary do it?"

"You're right. I have a secretary and you don't."

And I said, "Well, do you think you could call them up and tell them?"

He said, "No, but I could write them a note. Why don't you do that."

Good advice. So I did.

But I was kind of embarrassed that I couldn't get along with some clients. He said, "Oh, hell, only about one client in ten is any good. A lot of them you can't work with."

Riess: But he didn't eliminate the other nine?

Scott: No, but he must have eliminated some. He always told you things straight he didn't beat around the bush about it. He was always direct.

Riess: Well, as far as the hand-holding, and the sort of intimate relationships that you found yourself stuck with, what did he do with that?

Scott: Of course as a man it was a different situation, and his personality and mine are very, very different. He could josh people out of their problems, charm them out or josh them. Whereas I'm too serious a person and it took me a long time to be able to joke with my clients. I took them too seriously. Tommy didn't let himself get that involved.

Also a lot of his clients he knew socially before he ever went to work for them. And I always made just the opposite point of never working for friends. I've seen many instances where it didn't work out, where you lost a friendship and the job didn't come out well anyway. Whenever in my office a friend wanted me to do the garden, I would always say, "No, if my partner wants to do it, fine, but I will not." I refused social invitations with clients consistently during my entire practice and I broke with both of my former partners on this very point. They thought it was fun to go to dinner and accepted invitations to their summer homes or weekends, but I never did. I don't like to mix business and pleasure. As I said, several of my clients have become my lifelong friends, but after the job was done. I accepted no social engagement during the time the job was being planned or constructed. And this is a very strong point with me, but Tommy didn't work that way at all.

Riess: Does it make a difference whether money is an issue, I mean, if money is no problem then everything is always much easier. It sounds like money was no problem with many of Tommy's clients.

Scott: This could be. I couldn't say that I had more than four or five clients in my life where money was no problem. I think Tommy had many. I think the money issue was a factor in almost every job I ever did. I can only remember one job where we never discussed money at all. Only one. But Tommy had lots of these. I discussed that point with Tommy, too.

"We never discussed money; we'd just do it and send them a bill." See, that's quite different.

Riess: Speaking of Tommy's wit, there was some talk where he admitted that the only minority group he was interested in was the rich.

Scott: Sounds like Tommy. [Laughter] I don't know what Tommy's politics are, but I bet he's a Republican. Never asked him.

Riess: So he ends up responsible only to himself in all his work.

Scott: He did do a few public housing projects, but I don't think it was because he had a social consciousness or felt a great desire to do them. [Laughter] It was because he was prominent and whoever the architect was probably said, "Well, I'd like Tommy Church to be the landscape architect," and that was that.

#### 9) The American Society of Landscape Architects

Riess: This issue of membership in the ASLA: would you repeat what you told me earlier about Tommy's relationship with that group?

Scott: Yes, I'll have to go back a little bit. Tommy never joined the ASLA early in his life.\*

Riess: Yet in 1937 he exhibited with the ASLA.

Scott: Oh, yes, he was always respected by them and he's been honored by them several times.

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\*Church elected [non-voting] member in 1930; no longer a member by 1934. ASLA Yearbooks show some Church work 1930-1934.

Scott: But one of the requirements in the ASLA ethical practice code is that you not take any discounts or make any money on the side for materials, that your fees are entirely for services. Now he was in effect doing his own contracting and buying materials at wholesale from nurseries and charging them out at retail. In other words, he was making money on materials.

He knew and recognized that and said, "I can't belong to the ASLA. I can't practice their way and make a living," said he. "Two girls to raise, I can't practice that way. I have to practice the way I feel that I must practice to make a living. So I'm going to go on practicing the way I practice, therefore I can't be a member of the American Society of Landscape Architects." Which is a very honest, great way to be.

Now, the ASLA was set up in Boston and its headquarters were there for a long time and it was very exclusive, instead of being an inclusive organization. Its standards were very high. It had members who were not practicing ethically, this always happens when you really start your standards unreasonably high. It became known as the "landscape priesthood." An article appeared in Harpers magazine, of all places, I wouldn't know the year, an anonymous article which castigated the profession for being exclusive and not representative of the profession as it existed. (Slowly things came about that made the organization become a little bit more broad and more inclusive. One of the things was the establishment here in California of a California Association of Landscape Architects.)

I was a member of the ASLA; I went in about what year? 1929, '30, '32, something like that, but I drew out later. This exclusive eastern organization knew nothing and cared less about our practice here in the west which was quite different, kicked back no money to the chapter from what seemed like very high dues, and did not respond to the problems we presented to them. So a number of people drew out and others who had never been members went together to form a California Association of Landscape Architects of which Professor Vaughan was the first president. This was a bay region organization. It wasn't southern California; they later formed a southern California chapter.

The California group set up an ethical code that was broader, less stringent than the national, and began to try to solve some of our particular problems, such as the fact that there were no landscape contractors and that we had to practice the way Tommy was practicing because there was no established group that could construct our jobs. That was just one of our problems. California was a new state, looked at in comparison with Massachusetts and Washington and the places where the big estates were in the east, where they have an established professional contracting group.



Scott: Tommy joined this association out here which became quite influential and formed the pattern for the broadening of the ASLA and finally one of our members was asked to be the director of the ASLA, went from this organization, moved the office from Boston to Washington, and patterned the organization on the concepts developed here in this California organization.

Tommy just went right along doing what he was doing. He didn't bother to join the ASLA, he was very successful in working the way he wanted to, there was no reason for him to change. He was doing very outstanding work which everybody recognized. He'd been made a director of the American Academy in Rome, he'd been back at Harvard lecturing. Tommy could do no wrong. I mean Tommy was recognized as a successful professional and perfectly honest about his practice.

Riess: Others couldn't have gotten away with it?

Scott: No, I think they could not. Harry Shepherd was one of the prime movers towards registration. Of course, Tommy had to become registered when we did get registration, but we all went in under the grandfather's clause, because we'd been practicing, a great group of us, had been practicing for some time, so we automatically became registered in the state without taking the examination, whereas all new people had to qualify.

Riess: Yes, well, that's interesting in light of that to think that now landscape architects in this state are having to battle even to exist.

Scott: Yes, all over again.

#### 10) Fellow Creators: The Artistic Climate

Riess: I'm interested that Imogen Cunningham was at Tommy's birthday party. Was he involved with a whole artistic crowd also, would you say? What was the extent of his bohemian side?

Scott: Yes, Streatfield asked this same question the last time he was down here. I think all of us were involved with and knew the artists in this region. Tommy knew Adaline Kent very well and, of course, commissioned her to do the big piece of sculpture in the pool up in the Donnell garden. His clients were wealthy enough to occasionally commission a piece of sculpture or buy a piece of sculpture. It was Mrs. Morley at the San Francisco Museum who set up these three exhibits that were held there. She coupled in her mind landscape architecture and art, and she could see the relationship. After the war, there was a great burst of creative activity in all the arts here and we all knew each other.

Scott: All the artists, architects and landscape architects had been brought together planning for the Exposition in 1939, but they couldn't work together well because the Musician's Union threw a monkey wrench in the planning of the Exposition, insisting that all works on Treasure Island had to be executed by union members, and this really threw the artists, and the sculptors particularly, into a frenzy of dissension, whereas we'd all been friends before.

Florence Swift--several people had placed works of hers in gardens. I know Royston put one of her things on a garden in Marin county. Claire Falkenstein we all knew, and her sculpture appeared in the museum and at garden shows. I had a mobile of Claire's in my garden down in Palo Alto. I did a garden for Mrs. Kent, Sr. to display many of Adeline's sculpture; we placed eight or ten pieces of Adeline's sculpture in the garden, designed it for that purpose.

We were a small group of artists and landscape architects. Painters didn't really come into the act, it was mainly sculptors.

Riess: Were you saying that the contact at Treasure Island was the thing that made you all know each other?

Scott: No, there were many artists here and we were all invited to participate in the Exposition. There was a real spirit of creativity and it was recognized by all of the artists at that time.

Riess: Did it center around any particular institutions like the California School of Fine Arts or the museum or any particular gallery?

Scott: Yes, as I said, it was Mrs. Morley at the San Francisco Museum who could see the relationship and invited artists to exhibit together. Of course, there were people teaching at the Labor School also. Claire Falkenstein taught at the Labor School and Bob Howard taught there. Art courses at the Labor School was very strong and of course this was considered radical. [Laughter]

# 11) Sunset Magazine

Riess: What would you say Sunset magazine did for the profession out here?

Scott: The Lanes bought Sunset and they brought in Walter Doty.\* Elsa Knoll was working on Sunset already as garden editor. But the Lane Publishing Company gave it a new direction certainly.

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\*[Walter Doty hired as editor by L.W. Lane in 1939. L.W. Lane purchased magazine in 1928. Mel and Bill Lane active with magazine since World War II. S.R.]

Scott: But to answer your question, no magazine would have anything to publish if there weren't a profession producing something for them to publish. There was great activity in this San Francisco Bay Area which they saw, and they began to exploit their opportunity much more than the previous publisher. And, of course, during the war there hadn't been anything happening. This great burst of creative activity came at the end of the war. They began to have flower shows again with model gardens in the flower shows, and to open art and garden centers. People were bursting to build and to express themselves with the use of new materials. It was a wonderful period.

Sunset kept increasing its circulation and its staff; it was exploiting this rebirth of energy and interest in gardening. Sunset did a great deal, I would say, for landscape architects in a way. But they wouldn't have had anything to publish if the work hadn't been there to publish. They began photographing gardens and publishing them.

In another way they did us a disservice, maybe not intentionally. They made people want to employ landscape architects, but they gave the impression that our services were very reasonable, that they weren't exorbitant. That made many people come to us wanting services that we couldn't perform for the price they could afford to pay. It made a group of people who really couldn't afford services for a custom-designed garden at all think that they could do it themselves.

Sunset is a do-it-yourself magazine. Now people do have lots of skills, and American males really have enormous amount of ingenuity and strength and many of them are very good, and can do a lot of the work, but there are techniques to be learned. If you're going to teach an individual client, this is the kind of tutoring that's the most expensive form of education in the world. So that you maybe could produce a plan for them, but then they couldn't interpret it. They wanted to install their gardens themselves. So they forced us into a position of trying to instruct some of these clients in how to do it, a service we simply couldn't perform.

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from Landmark, a UCB, Department of Landscape Architecture publication, 1975

## Interviews



### GERALDINE KNIGHT SCOTT

*Geraldine Knight Scott graduated from the University of California at Berkeley. After graduation she continued her studies at Cornell University. In her long career she has been involved with both public and private projects, and in both design and planning. Her experiences also include teaching at the University of California at Berkeley. She has practiced and lived in the Bay Area for many years.*

*"What made you choose landscape architecture in the first place?"*

I'm not sure, I was very young. I was in high school and somehow I did not know any landscape architects. I don't know really how I knew the words, but I only remember that a teacher went around the class asking what were we going to do when we graduated and of course I was going to college, what were we going to study and I said landscape architecture and the class just roared. This was a girls high school in San Francisco. The teacher who was an unusual person, thought this was absolutely crazy. And she said "do you know any landscape architects?" and I said, "no" and she said, "do you want to meet one?" and of course I said I'd like to. She said "you'll never make a living at it, this is a crazy thing for you to study." She took me to see Stephen Child and Stephen Child obviously hadn't starved to death. He lived very well and had a lovely home and fine books and pictures and every evidence of culture and of a life that had been a successful one. And he was a very charming man. I don't remember anything about the interview but I never deviated in my desire to become a landscape architect.

*"What experiences have influenced you most regarding landscape architecture?"*

Well, I guess I go back to when I was shocked to find that landscape architecture was originally in the College of Agriculture, and that I had to take so much science, because I felt that landscape architecture was a design profession and that the design should have been emphasized more, and that's what I strove to get, because I feel that it's both an art and a science. This is part of the great dilemma of the whole profession, that it is both an art and a science and very few people are good at both. So each practitioner tends to emphasize one or the other. My own bent is more toward the artistic though as for math and science, I don't regret having had those. I did learn a lot and with the later emphasis on ecology I found that I was well prepared because I had had a pretty balanced education by the time I got through. I have gone on adding, not to science, but in my practice I have always added and added and added all I could on the art side.

In my later life I think that going to Japan was really a very great esthetic experience for me. It was a kind of fulfillment, because I had studied Japanese brush painting with Mr. Obata here during the depression. I had studied Chinese art in some courses in University Extension. I came back from Europe being very impressed with European art but feeling that there was always something left out, that the emphasis on western European art was wrong and the omission of all the oriental in all art teaching was a disgrace. So I kept trying to fill this void in my art education. Mr. Obata was in the art department here. He kept saying that when he went to Japan he would take me. Well, with wars and one thing and another it wasn't possible until after the 2nd World War. This was in 1954. Mr. Obata of course had entré being a Japanese artist and an American citizen, but having come from a line of Japanese artists, he had entré for us to anything and every place. This was really a very great esthetic experience, because this was before Japan changed into the modern country it is today. It was the beginning of their industrialization. Also I think that going at that time I appreciated it and enjoyed it more than if I had gone twenty years earlier, when I first wanted to go, because I was a more mature person and I could understand and accept the traditional in a way that I, as a young rebel, could never have. Had I been a young person studying landscape architecture in Japan at the same time I would have rebelled, as they later did, because the schools were really perpetuating a set of forms out of which the life had gone. What they were really teaching in landscape architecture in Japan was archeology.

They were measuring the old gardens and redrawing them and doing things in the tradition. They were not fostering the kind of originality which had produced those gardens in the first place, but looking at them from my standpoint I could see through that and really got a very very great lift out of it. . . . I really began to understand the principles behind the Japanese gardens, and for me it was a great inspiration.

The freedom of design, the influence of line and of getting away completely from the geometric has certainly been a very great influence on western design. The Japanese experience had a very great effect in loosening up my design, I feel, and also in giving me a greater appreciation of textures and materials.

*"What do you see as your most rewarding projects?"*

I think the most rewarding projects have been those in which there was a really sympathetic understanding between the client and myself, . . . where in effect, you worked with the client and where the client had some understanding of design. So you present an idea or several ideas and really talk them over, and really modify as you got to know the people, and make the thing much more sympathetic and appropriate for the client. Now this is true whether the client is an individual or a corporation, school board or whatever, finding an individual on that school board, in that corporate structure with whom you really had a sense of rapport. The other kind of exciting job, for me, has been to be part of a very big project. . . . I enjoyed very much working on the Exposition (on Treasure Island) with many, many people dealing with a big idea, which was to exhibit the best of the Pacific area. I also enjoyed very much working on some public housing projects, until I found that the Federal restrictions were too great and you did not have enough liberty to design within the restrictions. I enjoyed the Oakland Museum. Again I was not the principal but I enjoyed very much working on it, because I think it's a great building and a great concept. Kevin Roche wanted it to look like an old villa, where artifacts were collected and remained. He wanted the building to be timeless and I believe it is.

What the University's job is, it seems to me, is to somehow make it possible for students to develop more of their individual talents. Now, one of the things, one of the great things that came out of the Free Speech Movement at the University, was a peripheral thing: I saw many very timid students who had deep convictions about free speech, suddenly became very good propagandists, they became very good politicians, such ability had never shown up at all. I don't know whether professors intimidate students. . . . or we don't give enough time, but I think, (and I hate the word selling,) you must be able to put your ideas across, clearly. . . . I think sincerity carries a good deal of weight, I think that if you

believe in what you are doing this is conveyed to other people.

What you do as you come out of the University, what you do next to try to supplement (your education) is your own decision. I think if you are honest with yourself you know what your weaknesses are and your strengths and you try to pick up your weaknesses. You try to supplement what you don't have somehow, as I didn't feel that I'd had enough design and I worked and worked to get it. I think you can do this yourself. It isn't always possible. You have to earn a living, you have to take a job, any kind of a job you can get. And you can learn out of any kind of experience, for a time, but as soon as that situation begins to annoy you and irritate you, you should leave it no matter what. When you are more concerned with the irritations of a situation than with what you're getting out of it, drop it, go hungry first, do anything, because it corrodes your personality, rapidly. There is nothing worse than to work in a situation or for a person that you hate.

I think you have to get both design and science. You can't have too much of either. The unfortunate thing is that the science departments in the University do not want to provide service courses for landscape architects and it takes too much time to take laboratory sciences. You simply haven't time. This is a very big problem. The architect relies on the landscape architect for his knowledge of drainage, of road conditions, of soils, and very often the landscape architect lets him down. So more and more we have specialists, soil technologists, hydrologists, etc. You can't know it all but if you know your weakness then you know the kind of specialist you have to bring on the job, anything that you can't supply, but you have to know enough to be able to talk to that expert and know what he is telling you. Landscape architecture is a synthesizing job, you've got to know enough about a great many subjects to synthesize a lot of material and put it to use. I certainly don't think that a four year course can begin to do it. Its a start that's all it is. . . .

*"What sort of an obligation do you think landscape architects have to serve society and to buck the system when they feel pressured to do something they don't believe in?"*

Hard to generalize here. I think that some people, some landscape architects have strong social consciousness, and if they have they are going to feel a very great obligation to society. I think others don't have this at all. Perhaps the ones that don't have it are the ones who tend to be heavy on the design or art side. They feel that if they do whatever they are able to do as well as they can, then they have fulfilled their obligation to society. . . . Others want to do something very significant on a much larger scale and if they do, they have to work politically, they have to understand the society in which they operate and they have to understand a good deal about economics, and sociology or else they

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can't do it. And I don't think you can make one kind of person into the other. It goes back again to the particular character traits that the individual has. They're all possible within the field of landscape architecture which is an exceedingly broad one.

If you desperately want to do something in the social sense you will find a way to do it. You will be much happier working for one of the agencies such as the National Parks Service or the National Forest Service or the Environmental Protection Agency — which would have very little precise design in the terms of drawing. But I still consider design a synthesis, of taking conditions, analyzing them and putting them together, if its protection or conservation or whatever, its a design, its a plan. All planning is a synthesis.

There's still an emotional problem here: of the relationship of the individual to the thing that he creates, just as some artists make jewelery and some artists want to put an 18 mile fence across Sonoma County.

What is Christo doing? Is he an artist, is he a landscape architect? I think the environmental design department should bring in Christo and debate this with him. Whether you like it or not it should be discussed. I think we should know what Christo thinks he's doing. I see some very great significance in this . . . jurisdictional boundaries are invisible but you fight them all the time, the lot boundary, the county boundary, the sewer district, its there, its real and you fight it but its not visible. Christo by doing this is cutting across all kinds of things and making a boundary visible. . . Christo is able to put a very big idea across, to get somebody to finance him to do it, it gets a lot of publicity, all of that I deplore, in a way, and yet he makes people think. I don't mean that landscape architects ought to imitate him in anyway but I think landscape architects ought to be learning something from what he is doing, when he wraps a cliff down in Australia or when he builds a curtain across a gorge or when he puts a fence out across the hills of California. . . But I find that the university never grapples with these problems. Universities don't lead, they follow.

Landscape architects ought to do some daring things, occasionally, but they ought to be done out of deep conviction, not as stunts. If they feel for big, significant things they ought to be daring about it. Big ideas are desperately needed in this country but I don't think they can be cooked up in short order and served forth. We have too much of that. I think that landscape architects have only begun, in the schools and elsewhere, to grapple with really big issues and they are not yet trained and so its going to take a long time before we can do it adequately.

Regional Oral History Office  
The Bancroft Library

University of California  
Berkeley, California

Blake Estate Oral History Project

Geraldine Knight Scott

LONG-RANGE PLANS FOR BLAKE GARDEN, 1962-1987

An Interview Conducted by  
Suzanne B. Riess  
in 1987





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## INTERVIEW HISTORY

The Blake Gardens were a part of Geraldine Knight Scott's Department of Landscape Architecture duties from 1962 to 1968. When Anita Blake died in 1962 the control that she had exercised over every detail of planting and maintenance was in Mrs. Scott's hands.

Granted very few people from the University of California at Berkeley or members of the community even knew of the existence of the Blake Estate, to the neighbors on Rincon Road in Kensington the transition to the University's stewardship was all too visible and abrupt. They knew Mrs. Scott had arrived because she pruned the trees!

Without Geraldine Knight Scott, however, what is now a garden with distinct formal features would be rampant and obscure. Mrs. Scott, an active practitioner of, as well as lecturer in, landscape architecture, was free of the awe for the relic that might have possessed less clear-eyed designers. As well as being fearless, Mrs. Scott was, as Linda Haymaker puts it in her interview, "the most sensitive person who has dealt with this garden since the Blakes."

Geraldine Knight Scott had another challenge. Besides dealing with day-to-day garden decisions, she was asked in 1963 to create a Long-Range Development Plan for Blake Estate. [Excerpts from that plan are appended.] It was presented in 1964 to the Department of Landscape Architecture but never given any attention. Mrs. Scott looks back on it as at best a teaching and learning experience for those who participated in the studies required to formulate the plan. It had little more impact than that, for want of interest and commitment on the part of the University.

The ambivalent attitude to the Blake Estate continued through the middle sixties, but in 1967 Blake House emerged as the President's House. Mrs. Scott as Supervising Landscape Architect worked with the architects in remodelling the house and grounds to make the Blake Estate function as a residence for incoming President and Mrs. Charles Hitch. Today Geraldine Knight Scott continues to be concerned for the future of the garden. She is also interested in the future of the study of landscape architecture. As the department reevaluates itself, the Blake Garden will perhaps move from the periphery of attention and use to a place closer to the center and closer to the wishes of the Blakes in entrusting it to the University.

Geraldine Knight Scott is well known to the Regional Oral History Office. She was interviewed in 1977 for the Thomas Church Oral History Project [1978]. A few years later she taped an autobiographical memoir with landscape architect Jack Buktenica as her interviewer. It has not been released. More recently Mrs. Scott has been editing fifteen tapes done with her on her garden design class. And she is vitally involved in compiling the history of the Department of Landscape Architecture at the University.

It was a pleasure to spend time with someone so committed to historical documentation of the oral history variety. Mrs. Scott's husband, Mel Scott, author of The Future of San Francisco Bay, had earlier in the year contributed a thoughtful Afterword to the Save San Francisco Bay Association oral history. He was in his studio, painting--fascinating, highly detailed colorful works which he exhibits--while Mrs. Scott and I talked, and looked over the number of helpful reprints and illustrations which she had assembled to illuminate our interview.

Suzanne B. Riess  
Interviewer-Editor

November 11, 1987  
Regional Oral History Office  
486 The Bancroft Library  
University of California, Berkeley

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

(Please print or write clearly)

Your full name Geraldine Knight SCOTT

Date of birth July 16-04 Place of birth Wallace, Idaho

Father's full name Henry Potten Knight - deceased 1911

Birthplace Oregon

Occupation Lawyer

Mother's full name Orene Lansdale Knight - deceased

Birthplace Colfax, Washington 1911

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Where did you grow up ? Coeur d'Alene, Idaho - Colfax Washington  
Oakland, California + San Francisco

Present community Berkeley, Calif.

Education Girl's High, SF. - UC, Berkeley BS 1926

Grad School, Cornell Univ. 26-28

Occupation(s) Landscape Architect, private practice  
+ Lecturer, Dept. of L.A., UCB

Special interests or activities Arts of Arch. Sculpture, Painting  
Weaving - Travel



Early Horticultural History/Blake Gardens

[Date of Interview: February 24, 1987]

Harry Shepherd and Katherine D. Jones

Riess: Were you at Blake Gardens as a student?

Scott: Yes, I probably went with Professor Shepherd and met Mrs. Blake, maybe once or twice, when I was a student.

Riess: Did she come out to greet students?

Scott: Well, I think I went alone with Shepherd, not with a group. We were only a class of eight, so even if we'd gone as a group--but I don't recall that we did.

Riess: Well, tell me all about that meeting. [laughs]

Scott: Oh, she didn't make a great impression. She was obviously English, with a nice English accent, and pleasant. The garden was very overgrown.

Riess: Why did she have an English accent? She was not English.

Scott: Well, she did have a cultivated voice, maybe you'd call it that. She used the broad "a."

Riess: "Ahh."

Scott: Yes. I assumed that was an English accent, I suppose.

Riess: Was Miss Symmes there at the same meeting?

Scott: I don't recall ever meeting Miss Symmes. I should have, because she was a member of the California Horticultural Society, and she and Miss Katherine D. Jones were obviously connected with each other, but I never met her. I've looked at pictures of her and I know I never met her.

Riess: In a way your answers are eliminating a whole series of questions I had about connections between Miss Jones, and the garden, and you, and women.

Scott: I've learned quite a bit about Miss Jones recently. I have been recalling my first teachers for a history that the Department of Landscape Architecture is getting out. Miss Jones, I learned from some material that Tom Brown brought me, was here when John Gregg came to start a landscape design department. In some biographical material about Miss Jones she refers to Miss Symmes, and Miss Symmes was a student in the department for a short time. She did not get a degree and what her years in the department were I don't know. [Symmes was a student in 1914.] But she got to know Miss Jones better than I did, obviously, as a student.

Riess: In The Bancroft Library in Anita Blake's papers are some papers in Welsh, and I think that they are some of Katherine Jones' material.

Scott: I hadn't known she was Welsh. I knew her only as a curious character—

Riess: In this paper it says her parents were Welsh.\*

Scott: Yes, right, and she apparently had a good singing voice, like so many Welsh people, and sang in a choir all the time. I never would have guessed because she was such a shy Victorian lady. She knew her plant materials and taught them very well. John Gregg relied on her; I mean, she was the mainstay of the department. Naturally she would have been acquainted with the Blakes, and the Blakes with her, because they were collectors of plants, and she was probably the most knowledgeable person in this area.

Riess: And yet she wasn't using the gardens for her own teaching purposes?

Scott: [pause] She probably did. She took us there maybe once or twice, but also to gardens all around the Bay Area.

Riess: What other gardens would she have taken you to visit in the Bay Area that would have been considered comparable then?

Scott: Other gardens such as the McDuffie weren't comparable, but we went to Golden Gate Park to learn plants, or Belvedere to see many smaller gardens because each micro-climate was different.

Riess: So you were looking at plants, you weren't looking at design?

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\*"Katherine Davies Jones, 1860-1943," by Mabel Symmes, in Madrono, April 1946, Vol. VIII, No. 6, pages 184-187. See Appendices.



Scott: Not with Miss Jones. She taught only plants, and she had little sense of design. She taught plants from a functional viewpoint, their tolerances and growth habits.

Riess: And when Harry Shepherd was using the gardens, what was he teaching?

Scott: He had a little more sense of design, probably, but he really taught construction and plants. He had learned his plant materials from her, as the first graduate of the department, and continued teaching in her method. Design was principally taught by Professor Gregg. Neither one of these people had any real sense of design as we use the term today.

Riess: I remember when I talked to John Gregg about design on campus it was clear that John Galen Howard's hand was strong in the campus landscaping as well as the architecture.\*

Scott: Right. But Gregg did, of course, arrange for us--even though we were in the College of Agriculture--to take all of the preliminary courses in architecture. There was that much liaison, which he doesn't even refer to in the oral history, but Gregg did establish a curriculum that was half in architecture and half in agriculture. But he didn't make the connection, really; we didn't have any of the architectural professors giving us design criticisms.

Riess: When you went to visit Mrs. Blake with Harry Shepherd--you weren't the only woman in your class, were you?

Scott: There was one other, Beatrice Williams.

Riess: I wondered if it was because you were a woman that Harry Shepherd had taken you to meet Mrs. Blake.

Scott: No, I worked for Harry on the outside, I knew Harry very well. I worked for both Gregg and Shepherd as a draftsman while I was in college and after Cornell. Shepherd was an exceedingly good estimator, I learned a great deal from him, we were simpatico people, an easier person to know than Gregg. He took me to see lots of places.

Riess: Was he doing some construction for Mrs. Blake?

Scott: No, I doubt that. We went to see the great variety of plants grown from seed.

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\*John W. Gregg, A Half-Century of Landscape Architecture, an oral history interview conducted 1965, Regional Oral History Office, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 1965.

Riess: So that was your only actual face-to-face contact with Anita Blake?

Scott: The only one I recall.

James West

Riess: When I talked with Mai Arbegast, we got into the question of where were Anita's letters from Anson; all of the letters that she had written to him are in The Bancroft Library, but where were all the letters that he was writing in return? Mai speculated that they were probably under the bed along with the James West letters, and the seed lists, and everything else. Can you shed any more light on what has happened?

Scott: None, no. Later when I was teaching, and the Blake House was empty, there were still piles of dishes that they had imported from China and Japan still in original crates. Sometimes the crates had been opened and the straw was all over the floor. There was a caretaker who lived there and took care of the many cats. The odor was terrific. When I first was asked by Professor Vaughan to take over the direction of the work in the garden, that's the state that the house was in.

Someone lived in the house because there were still pieces of furniture in some rooms, the leftovers, and these piles of dishes. I know that Duke Wellington--as we called him--Professor [Winfield Scott] Wellington from the household art department, had selected the best pieces, but where they had gone, I don't know. There were still stacks of marvelous bowls and plates from which one sample had been removed. I yearned to take one or two--of course never did--and have no idea what happened to all those beautiful, porcelain bowls and plates.

Riess: Chinese?

Scott: Yes, mostly.

Riess: Blue?

Scott: Many kinds.

Riess: So I guess you have heard about the James West letters that are gone.

Scott: I knew James West very well indeed, in Marin County, and I have a great many of James West's letters from South America. He talked often of Mrs. Blake, but I never went to the Blake Estate with James West. [pause] I don't know that correspondence. A lot of James

Scott: West's correspondence was turned over to the Horticultural Society and they published some articles about him.\* I've not turned over my letters from his trip to South America, but I still have them. James West was a very remarkable botanist, in touch with every other horticulturist in the bay region.

Riess: Yes, the corresponding among horticulturists is fascinating to me.

Scott: Right. Well, James West had traveled very widely, and so had the Blakes. He knew the flora of--I don't think he'd ever been to China, but he knew the flora of all of Europe and the Americas.

Riess: So the correspondence, would it include a few seeds in the envelope?

Scott: Doubtless.

Riess: And just a kind of excited discussion of something that had turned up?

Scott: That's what I would expect, but I don't know.

Riess: Is that the kind of correspondence that you had with him?

Scott: My correspondence was much later, from his trip to South America--after [Thomas Harper] Goodspeed sent him there on a plant-hunting expedition. Marvelous descriptive passages of the whole terrain and the life of the people, as well as lists of plants fill the letters I have.

Riess: Interesting.

Scott: I went with James West on a good many plant-hunting trips in the Sierras. He was myopic, wore very thick glasses, and his distance vision then was probably as poor as mine is right now. I had perfect vision, when I used to go with him. He would tell me what he was looking for, in a particular terrain, and the right association so I could find it for him. His descriptions were that clear.

Riess: What an interesting way to learn.

Scott: He was working with Jepson and others, knew every botanist and horticulturist and everyone knew him.

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\*"Incredible, Unforgettable James West, Plantsman, (1886-1939)," by Jack Napton, California Horticultural Society Journal, Vol. 28, No. 3, July 1967, 180-187, 196. Appendix HH.

## California Horticultural Society

Scott: When the horticultural society was founded in 1935—I was a founding member, but it was really Eric Walther, superintendent of Golden Gate Park and an authority on succulents, and James West who were the founders of that organization.

Riess: Why 1935?

Scott: That was the year of a big frost, which brought plant people together. Nobody in the San Francisco Bay Region knew what to do with plants after they'd been frozen. There were many good nurserymen, and good amateur growers, and professional growers at that time, and they were all in trouble--none knew exactly what to do. So those people who had lived in the east, or lived other places, felt the need to get together to discuss what to do with plants that had been frozen.

Riess: So it was a kind of camaraderie that did not really exist before?

Scott: That's right.

Riess: Would you say in fact that it had been more competitive before?

Scott: Yes, definitely. There were good nurserymen in the area, you know, competing with each other, and amateurs and professionals had their own kind of organizations, but trouble often brings people together.

Riess: I saw in the Anita Blake correspondence that Dr. Goodspeed asked her to write an article for him on vines in 1941.

Scott: I bet she got her knowledge from Katherine D. Jones, who wrote all these articles on vines.

Riess: "A Study of Climbers," in 1938.

Scott: As someone said, it has everything but social climbers in it. [laughs] Katherine Jones never got her due in this university. She was never made more than an instructor, and yet she was the mainstay of the landscape design department, with the most knowledge about plants and climate. She was there for seventeen years. Women.

Riess: "Women." It's as simple as that?

Scott: Yes. She had published quite a few things; this is just one. She was a real authority on acacias, wrote this section on acacias for Bailey's Encyclopedia of Horticulture. She had every reason to have been advanced to full professorship, but was not. Professor

Scott: Shepherd tried without success to increase her pension when she retired. An assistant professor's salary did not entitle her to an adequate pension.

Riess: Mabel was the garden designer and Anita the horticulturist and collector?

Scott: They had traveled in Italy together. They were both women of taste and culture. Miss Symmes came back to Berkeley and took some courses in the Department of Landscape Design. Garden design at that time was mainly the study of gardens of the Mediterranean region, of Spain and Italy, because the climates were similar, and most design at that time in California--architecture and landscape architecture--tended to be based on Mediterranean precedent. Miss Symmes was able to lay out a formal Italianate garden.

Riess: Would Mabel would have been like Isabella Worn? Did Mabel actually practice, from anything you know?

Scott: Not as far as I know. I'm sure they would have met and discussed gardens and plants. Isabella Worn set up a nursery in Marin County, and I'm sure Mabel would have acquired plants from her, or exchanged seeds. It was a common practice. Miss Worn also decorated for banquets and weddings.

Riess: I wish there were evidence--I suppose just scratching through all the letters would come up with it--of correspondence and fellow feeling among the Bournes, for instance, down at Filoli [Woodside], and the Blakes, and the McDuffies, with their Berkeley garden. I would wish to know whether they were interested in each others gardens.

Scott: Early copies of California Horticulture magazine have some references to all those places, I believe. Pacific Horticulture is a later development from California Horticulture Quarterly which started after the founding of the society. The editor now is George Waters, who is English and a very good horticulturist, and editor. He has familiarized himself with most of the early records of the society and has, of course, a complete file.

It's unfortunate that Victor Reiter, who was one of the founding members and a fine nurseryman in San Francisco, died just last year, because I'm sure he knew the Blakes very well.\*

Riess: And how they connected with everyone else.

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\*"Victor Reiter, Jr. 1903-1986," Pacific Horticulture, Vol.48, No. 1, Spring 1987, p. 47.

Scott: Right, he would have known more than anyone.

Riess: Elizabeth McClintock was trying to arrange a meeting with Peggy Brown, who might have remembered Anita Blake at horticulture society meetings.

Scott: Very probably she would have, and Victor Reiter. Who else? These early garden enthusiasts are passing. There are one or two other original members still alive. There is a former president, editor emeritus, F. Owen Pearce, who also has clear recall.

The House and Garden Come to the University

Geraldine Knight Scott In Charge

Walter Vodden, and the Neighbors

Riess: When we talked on the phone you said you were in charge at the gardens from 1958-1969. Walter Vodden came on the scene in 1957, hired by Punk [H. Leland] Vaughan, to help the Blakes in every way that he could.

Scott: Yes, Walter was there, and he became very valuable because he knew where the sprinkling system valves were, and things like this. The watering lines had all been put in piecemeal, not a designed system. Walter was also very helpful in making peace with the neighborhood because the neighbors resented having the University take over that property.

Riess: I didn't know that. What form did this resentment take?

Scott: Well, they knew that there would be more traffic, more people coming to the garden. They liked the remoteness and privacy of the area that they lived in, and were not happy to see it developed in any way, or become an institution. The people who lived above had often visited the garden, had been free to just walk through--any time. Also the monastery people next door weren't happy about having it become a University property; they preferred it to be as private as possible. Having classes, or groups of students coming to the garden, didn't appeal to the neighbors.

Riess: There had been a tradition of that, though.

Scott: Oh, but very few at a time. Classes were getting bigger by this time, you know. Earlier there had been only one carful of students, but by the time there were busses coming out--with classes of thirty students, or a whole chain of cars, or you have a University bus,

Scott: the neighbors didn't like that. (The property is in Kensington, an unincorporated town in Contra Costa County, not Berkeley, although it has a Berkeley zip code.)

There were water problems out there always: two natural streams run through and in flood years they overflowed, flooding the property below or the property that adjoins at the service entrance. Those neighbors fought over the property line all the time. They really had built too close to the property line, so they kept trying to move the line. A very peculiar woman, whose name I don't even remember, would keep appealing to the University to do something to try to control the deer problem. The University built a fence along that boundary, and then she objected to the line of the fence-- although it was put on the survey line. There were objections all the time from the neighbors.

When we really began to develop the garden for a presidential residence and had to put in lighting systems, naturally they didn't like that. Some wanted trees cut, the trees that were getting up into their views. There were always objections, but Walter was very good about keeping peace with the neighbors.

Riess: How did he do that?

Scott: Well, just by being friendly, I suppose, telling them they could still visit the garden, that nothing was changed. He was good at quieting their fears.

Riess: And did they not complain directly to the University?

Scott: Yes, some did. Also to the planning office in Contra Costa County.

Riess: Had it all been dormant when the Blakes were there?

Scott: Yes. No problem, that I know of but when they gave the garden to the University, and we began to prune or cut trees down, then they objected. People didn't want the garden touched; they wanted it left exactly the way it was. However, it was a jungle with the trees too close together. The garden had to be opened up if it was going to serve as a semi-public garden.

Riess: But the neighbors were offended by that?

Scott: Oh, yes.

Riess: At the same time they wanted the trees topped, though, or carved, for their views.



- Scott: Yes, different trees topped from the ones we were taking out. We were taking out trees for a different reason, taking out pines and conifers that were crowding each other, or because they were diseased. They wanted eucalyptus topped because they were getting up into their view. Competing interests.
- Riess: I wondered if any of them were contemporaries of the Blakes.
- Scott: Not that I know, but Walter would know.
- Riess: I know that Mrs. Blake's friend was someone named Agnes McCormick Barchfield.
- Scott: It was Mrs. Barchfield—now you give me the name—that complained most about the University. They had been good friends and I guess that explains it. She contended that she owned to the center of the creek. [laughs] Well, the creek moved its center frequently, and when the University tried to put up a fence, you see, they didn't put it in the center of the creek, it was put on the survey line. Mrs. Barchfield was connected to somebody; she had a straight pipeline to the vice-president's office and complained bitterly so that they always referred to her as "that can of worms" every time I called. [laughs]
- Riess: Actually the installation of lighting—again, I'm surprised that the neighbors would complain. That is a dark corner of the world. Wouldn't they welcome lighting for security?
- Scott: I would have thought so, but they didn't like the glare from the paved surfaces which interfered with their views of the bay.
- Riess: Oh, I see. So Walter was conciliatory, but the University was unbending, would you say?
- Scott: Yes, totally, I mean policy. Walter just had to make peace; he didn't have any authority.

#### Funding for Maintenance

- Riess: Who else was about the place? Churchill Womble was one of the gardeners. When you arrived there was Walter and who else?
- Scott: That's all. There was no endowment left and I had to beg for money to do everything that was necessary: the watering system was breaking down, the trees needed pruning, and all kinds of things were in need of repair. These were called "capital improvements," so the

Scott: Blake Estate would be No. 153 on the capital improvements list, and then it would move up to No. 107 maybe, by the next year, and so on. To do each was a battle, to get an allocation of funds for any purpose.

Riess: Were they beginning to have second thoughts about what they had taken on, then, do you think?

Scott: Management was funnelled through the department, and the department just didn't have that much clout, I guess. The battle for funds in the University is always there. It's a state university, and there's a budget, and you can't get anything unless you get it on the budget and then take your turn. Emergency funds didn't exist until we had a real flood one year, and then they found some emergency funds to take care of that.

Riess: It came completely unendowed?

Scott: So far as I know.

Riess: Robert Gordon Sproul was president when it came into the system, and then Clark Kerr--did Kerr take any interest in it?

Scott: Not so far as I know. Mrs. Kerr, but not Mr. Mrs. Kerr had her own ideas, of course, of making the house into a home for Prytanean graduate women students, yet any of us could have told her it wouldn't work. Anyway, she was a very strong person, and they found the money to do the work, about \$35,000 in all. What they did was put in double wash basins, and divide up the big bedrooms with partial partitions, so each girl had a little privacy, but not much.

Riess: I know you said to me that it was bound to fail, and I wanted to ask you today what was inevitable about it.

Scott: It was remote, and the girls wouldn't like that; they didn't want to be that far from campus activity--it was dark, it was remote. The first year a certain number of girls signed up, but they didn't sign up to come the next year, and they couldn't recruit. After two-and-a-half years, nobody wanted to be there.

Riess: I could see it as a very desirable place for a little scholarly activity. Maybe that was the notion that Mrs. Kerr had, that graduate students would wish to be cloistered and secluded.

Scott: But apparently they didn't wish to be.

Riess: Was it always something that the presidents had to deal with rather than the chancellors? In other words, Mrs. Strong wouldn't have been involved because it was University-wide rather than campus?

Scott: I don't know, that's a good question. I never dealt with anybody except Mr. Canning in the President's Office. It had been handed to him as a vice-president, in charge of property.

Riess: This was Lawrence Canning? [Assistant Business Manager, Business and Finance Office, Sproul Hall]

Scott: I always had to deal with him; everything was referred to him. When Professor Vaughan handed me the job and I asked, "How can I get anything done?" Punk would just say, "Call Mr. Canning." I'd call Mr. Canning; Mr. Canning would groan. [laughs]

Riess: So that even though it's your job, you become a thorn in his flesh.

Scott: Yes, right. He would laugh too, you know. There was no money.

Riess: I would really be interested in knowing whether, in fact, it was considered to be an extension of the Berkeley campus.

Scott: There was very little discussion. The department was not really interested in the property. Professor Vaughan had received it, and I had already had many jobs of remodeling old estates in Marin and San Mateo Counties. I was a natural. To hand it over to me—I was a lecturer, teaching one course, could I take this on—it was a cheap way of getting work done. All they'd have to do is put me on for two-thirds time to handle the Blake Estate, which they did.

But it was something I'd done a great deal of, I liked redeveloping old estates. I was teaching planting design, which includes the creation of outdoor spaces. This was a jungle to be cleared out to make some spaces that would be for visitors to a semi-public garden. I enjoyed working on the garden. But I had not enough money, or staff—you know. I had always done private estates before, never had to deal with a bureaucratic set-up.

#### Making Decisions

Riess: But as far as what you cleared out, you didn't have to check that with the University? Once they gave you the job, it was your baby?

Scott: My decisions. As a landscape architect that was my job. But there were objections from the neighbors, hating to hear the sound of the saw, and to taking down trees—people love trees. Also a few department people went out there and asked, "Why are you doing this?" They hadn't given the place two minutes' thought.

Scott: At the same time you should understand that the Department of Landscape Architecture philosophy was going through a very great change. It had started as gardening with great emphasis on horticulture. Then it moved into a strong design and construction phase, but a design emphasis, and at the same time as they added more design courses they dropped horticulture. (This was before the ecology movement.) They took out all the ag sciences-- all that I had had was taken out--and reduced the teaching of plants: whereas Miss Jones had taught about five hundred plants, plant materials were reduced to one hundred plants.

The staff and their main emphasis had shifted to what was called "analysis paralysis", i.e. to analyzing problems forever and ever, looking at social factors, and economic factors, etc. All very important, but cutting out almost all the ag sciences. When I was invited in to teach whatever I wanted to teach, I found that the weakest link in the profession was planting design. Private professionals were designing but didn't follow through with good planting designs. They were making excellent ground plans. So I chose to set up a course in planting design, the first one that had been offered at Cal. I was the only woman in the department, you know, so they just kept me there doing that plus working on the Blake Garden.

#### The Garden as a Teaching Tool

Riess: Was your course required?

Scott: Yes, it was required, but before students took it they had learned only one hundred plants. I couldn't teach much planting design, because they didn't know enough plants. Blake Garden was my laboratory. The department as such took almost no interest in the Blake Estate. I took my classes there, and we talked about design-- not just the plants. So it was a very good laboratory for me, for what I was teaching, real examples of real problems.

Riess: Did botanists study out there?

Scott: No, botany had changed its emphasis to micro-botany already, and was not at all interested. There were entomologists out there using the garden, and plant pathologists. Old estates are full of diseases, so Bob Raabe found it a wonderful laboratory. Trying to get more uses of it, I encouraged the entomology department to set up studies, which they did; they used it a good deal for studies in biological control of pests. And occasionally taxonomists used it. But the botany department made no particular use of it. Soil technology students took soil samples out of there and came out for study sessions. Various College of Agriculture people, made some use of Blake Garden.

- Scott: But the people at College of Environmental Design, no. I offered many times. Because we had a fairly complete survey it was ideal to use for design problems, really. The students could go to inspect the actual terrain and study the basic data. Once in a great while some professor would set up a problem out there, but very seldom.
- Riess: Did they have to clear what they were doing with you, any of these departments?
- Scott: No, no.
- Riess: So plant pathologists could just go out there, they didn't have to schedule themselves, or do something about it?
- Scott: [shakes her head]
- Riess: So that wasn't a problem.
- Scott: No, no problem.
- Riess: When students from Merritt and places like that came, how did they--?
- Scott: None of those came in my time.
- Riess: Oh, okay.
- Scott: We encouraged horticultural society people to visit the garden. We set up visiting hours. The whole point was to make it available and useful as a community resource.
- Riess: Because the more you did that the higher profile you'd get, and the University might begin to support it a little more, too?
- Scott: I don't know. It just didn't happen. It was Professor [Fran] Violich who asked me to make the study, he was acting chairman at the time.

[Note from Mrs. Scott]

In the American Society of Landscape Architect's Committee on Education School Evaluation Report on the Department of Landscape Architecture, University of California, 1966-1967, the following was included, under "Facilities and equipment available and used by the School": Blake Garden: 10 1/2 acres of gardens and undeveloped land, Blake Residence, greenhouse and head house. A gift to the University and the Department. A rich potential, but development possible only upon adequate staffing and adequate budget--realistic only in terms of private or foundation funding. 1957 Deed of Gift requires the Regents to keep the property for instruction and research for twenty years. After 1977 it could be sold. Perhaps that is why the Department was not interested in developing the use of the garden. [See page 501.]

## Long-Range Development Plan for the Blake Estate

Riess: Why don't we go to the long-range plan? Vaughan was head of the department, but it was Violich who requested it of you, in 1963?

Scott: I think he was acting chairman at the time that I completed it.

Riess: Did you welcome that undertaking?

Scott: Yes and no, because I knew it would be a lot of work, and [laughs] that I was being very much underpaid for doing it. Making a long-range plan was simply an extension of what I was already doing, just getting it down on paper.

Riess: Had you already been developing these ideas? Certainly for the garden plan?

Scott: Sure, yes. Under this title of asking me to do a long-range plan, Professor Vaughan must have wangled enough money to pay me for my extra time. But this was certainly the most for the least for the University. [laughs]

Riess: So in the long-range plan, then, you set up an administrative structure, for one thing?

Scott: Well, that's in the long-range, yes. I had already increased the staff of gardeners, but if it was going to be really developed, then it would take more maintenance, and I certainly had to develop a plan far enough to get some kind of a cost estimate of what would be required.

Riess: Was this plan to be presented to the Regents?

Scott: I don't know; it never was; it was only presented to the department, and I don't think the department ever even presented it to the college. A committee of the faculty was set up to review it, but they didn't review it until I forced them to.

Riess: Because they were not interested in the first place.

Scott: That's right. About half-way through they reviewed my proposals, and then finally they reviewed the whole thing. I asked Michael Laurie to make sketches for the report and involved as many department people as I could, my TA and some former graduate students to make the survey, and so on.

Riess: So it was a real exercise in landscape planning.

Scott: Getting it done within the University set-up as much as possible was certainly doing it the hard way, but everybody who did work on it learned a lot. I've talked to those people--like Michael Wheelwright

Scott: and Carlisle Becker who did the survey, and Harry Tsugawa (they're all mentioned in the introduction to it)—they all felt they learned a great deal from what they did. It was both a teaching and a learning experience.

Riess: When did the ideas for use of the house and the conference center concept come up?

Scott: The conference center came out of my mind, as a projection of what the property was suitable for. Nobody else had proposed that. I still think this is a legitimate use for it. That's what a long-range development plan is all about, the possible uses for an old piece of property and an old house.

Riess: Conference center, or something a little bit like the Center [for Advanced Study in Behavioral Sciences] at Stanford.

Scott: I went down to see that, and felt that the Blake property was suitable in every way for a similar use. But there was no interest at that time. Many people thought the University should just get rid of the property, as it's too remote from the campus to be really useful. But I felt perfectly sure the University's not going to sell property; there'll always be a use for it. It's tax-free. And they never could acquire anything comparable, so why would they get rid of it?

Riess: The long-range study basically just disappeared into the archives?

Scott: As far as I know.

#### A Committee of The Regents Visit

Riess: In December, 1965 Regent William Coblentz and Regent Catherine Hearst took a little tour of the house. In July, 1966 Catherine Hearst is quoted in the papers as feeling that \$33,000 just to pave over termites is not a justifiable expenditure by the Regents. Thirty-three thousand dollars was an estimated cost for some very basic structural work on the house so that it could be used. In other words, there was no love lost for the house.

Scott: This was before the Prytaneans were tenants even.

Riess: No, but this was before they knew they had to house President Hitch.

Scott: Oh, yes, I did take them on a garden tour, yes. We met out there—I'd forgotten all about this—also another woman from Los Angeles who was a Regent.

Riess: Chandler.

Scott: Mrs. Chandler, yes, and a couple of men. That was a funny episode. We met out there and discussed various problems, one being the need to fence the property completely, and why? Because of the deer. They couldn't believe there were deer there. After they went through the house and we were walking toward the rose garden, somebody turned around and there were four deer following us! A wonderful moment, just like a New Yorker cartoon. [laughs]

But I received no report on that meeting, nothing, no response--to me. [laughs]

Riess: Do you remember them responding to the garden positively?

Scott: Oh, yes, people all thought it was a lovely, lush place.

Riess: And it was looking pretty wonderful by 1965-66?

Scott: Oh, yes, I'd gotten a great deal of the overgrowth removed and a new lawn where the big lawn now is. It was in pretty good shape by that time. The old greenhouse had been removed, and a proper work yard, corporation yard, and tool house installed.

Riess: And was there a handsome sign at the entrance that identified it?

Scott: No. There was only a small sign. The garden was only open in the afternoons. I don't remember the schedule, but whenever Walter was willing to have it open, four days a week or something like that. There were quite a few visitors to the garden.

#### Wider Use

Riess: You said that you had been putting on some courses in horticulture.

Scott: Yes, for some neighborhood women, and people from various garden clubs. We advertised and held classes in the headhouse of the greenhouse.

Riess: Extension classes, or how were they administered?

Scott: Under Extension, I guess. I can't remember how it was set up. I taught several short courses and later somebody else taught them. Linda Haymaker also taught some later. There were classes of twelve to fifteen women one morning a week. They learned plants and a little bit about design, or how to put plants together in garden compositions in relation to form, color, texture etc.



Riess: Sounds like it would be good for goodwill, in any event.

Scott: Yes, it got the place known and used, and I guess justified some of the work, as a University resource.

Riess: In fact, the place is still not known.

Scott: Oh, no, not widely.

I tried to interest the College of Environmental Design as a whole in using it for entertainment purposes, or anything—having class reunions out there. And then it came up one time—I think I told you—about a wedding.

Riess: No.

Scott: I had two foreign students working in the greenhouses, for very minimum pay, two foreign students who met there and loved the place. They were from different countries, I don't remember which. Anyway, they wanted to get married out there. So, "Would it be all right to have it there?" And I said, "I don't know why not," I thought it was great. Then I thought, uh oh, University—I'd better ask. So I called Mr. Canning, and Mr. Canning said sort of "Ho, hum, hmmm. Is this a religious ceremony?" And I said, "I don't know; I never thought to ask." "Well, find out." And so I found out, and no, it wasn't.

So then he asked if wine would be served? (This was before they had an open campus.) I said, "I doubt it, they're so poor; I don't think that these kids have anything." Finally Mr. Canning said, "Well, let's just pretend you didn't ask." So okay, they went ahead and were married in the garden, and all went well.

It was at least four years after that before the garden was ever used for a wedding again. It has become a very popular place to have weddings since then. But--[laughs]

Riess: I guess the University was sensitive.

Scott: It was very uptight.

Riess: Did faculty wives use it for garden parties, or whatever?

Scott: I proposed setting up a Friends of the Blake Estate, a separate organization like Friends of the Library, but I got little response. I did invite some faculty wives from the whole College of Environmental Design to discuss that idea--no takers.

Riess: Why?

Scott: I don't know, just no takers. Nobody wanted to put any effort into it, so nothing happened.

Riess: Is that because everybody was--you know, were we all concerned with Vietnam? It sounds almost like it was something that had to do with the times as much as the place.

Scott: I think it was; people just weren't interested in doing any more about the University.

Riess: Or gardens weren't relevant, maybe. I mean, if you read the Berkeley Barb publicity when Hitch moved in, there was general disapproval.

Scott: Oh, well, they tried to picket the place, sure, during the construction. There was great protest because the remodelling was costing so much money, and even the governor didn't have a residence at that time. The old governor's residence had been condemned. Reagan was governor; he didn't have any proper place to live; they were going to build another place for him. We had to assure everybody that this was private money--not state money--being paid for the work. There were threats of picketing all the time the house was under reconstruction.

Riess: You mean by students?

Scott: Students, and labor. A lot of union labor didn't want to work there because the gardeners weren't union. They were employed by the University, but that didn't make any difference to the union. The union was really up in arms over this. The University was not popular at that time at all, and this expenditure--I don't know how much money it was.

Riess: It was \$438,000 ultimately, I think.

Scott: Today we think that is peanuts, but there was a great deal of feeling against spending such a sum.

Riess: Your effort to organize a Friends of the Blake Estate was prior to your having any idea that it might be a presidential residence?

Scott: Yes, and then I was simply informed that that was going to happen.

Blake House Becomes the President's House

Riess: When did you hear about it first?

Scott: I guess the chairman of the department must have—it was Professor Vaughan again, he was still there—told me what had been decided, and I was recommended as the landscape architect, to work with Ron Brocchini, the architect.

I met with Ron Brocchini first, and Norma Willer. We all met out there together to look at what the problems were, and how we'd have to "hitch" the garden to the house, [laughs] what provisions we'd have to make for the construction, and at the same time keep the garden available to students and visitors. We had to recognize that these two activities would go on at the same time.

Riess: So that means access to the gardens.

Scott: We had to talk about how we were going to handle parking, and entrances, and delivery, and placement of materials during construction, and all of the typical problems of reconstruction.

Riess: I've looked at the files a lot, and there are many memos. In one of the first memos in the first paragraph it lists the things that the Hitches required, or wished to have, and it included a swimming pool, and it also included something Nancy Hitch had seen somewhere in Europe and liked very much, an outdoor eating area and fireplace; And places for Caroline to play, and arrangements for dogs and so on and so on. Were you in on the very early discussions of all this stuff?

Scott: I don't remember such a list. I met with Mr. Hitch up in the President's Office, with Ron Brocchini and Norma Willer—Mrs. Hitch not present at that first meeting. But I guess this list of what was wanted was discussed and how each item could be accommodated.

Riess: Were budget considerations uppermost, or was it just going to go ahead?

Scott: Not discussed in my presence at all. Never discussed. As far as I was concerned I was simply to plan to join garden to house, and accomodate each feature. There was no budget set up for the landscape work.

Riess: Was it a time then that you could do a lot of things that you'd always wanted to do in the garden, because now here at last is a lot of money?

Scott: Yes it did mean some further development, in line with my wanting to do something in the area on the west side, below the house. That area was a natural for a lake. It was remote for a swimming pool, but we did consider it. I did a preliminary plan, with a swimming pool there, and it was considered too costly and too remote from the house. That area ended by becoming a golf putting green. We considered the swimming pool in other locations closer to the house, but they were worried about control responsibilities when it would be more accessible to visitors. We considered a steel tank pool raised well above the grade, instead of at ground level, as really the best way to build a pool on the site. Such a pool would be earthquake proof—it's so close to the Hayward fault. That was the best way to construct a pool in any case on that property. But that was ruled out as being too expensive. I didn't get into estimating the cost, as it was simply ruled out.

Riess: What were the major changes in the garden?

Scott: Well, the parking areas, of course. There had been very little parking area, and the problem of how to get deliveries to the kitchen entrance—so close to the main entrance at the same time—and screenings, and garage—they wanted the garage in the house, so it had to go clear around and under.

Then Mrs. Hitch couldn't back out easily. Later we had to build an extension on a platform, backing over what was called the Australian Hollow, on the other side of the ridge. That platform allowed three extra parking places for servants or people assisting in the house. I had to plan all of that plus fencing, because they wanted the formal garden fenced, and the two gates, with electronic controls. I also redesigned the house terraces and stairways to the lawn area below the house on the west.

Riess: These are desirable things for the house, and the garden lighting—I guess maybe that's something that you had perhaps always wanted to do.

Scott: Oh, definitely desirable to do, and if they were going to entertain it certainly was almost a necessity to add lighting to the garden in addition to the entrance road. The parking and entrance way had to be well lighted. Indirect lighting of the garden was something I proposed and accomplished. It's in complete disrepair now, I believe.

Riess: I wanted to ask about it. There was an estimate from Scott Beamer for garden lighting that was going to cost about \$25,000, and yet your budget ultimately, for all of your work, which includes something called landscape lighting, was only \$29,000.

Scott: Some landscape details went in one budget, and some in another. I don't recall exactly.

Riess: But the grand plan for the garden lighting did go in?

Scott: Not all, some of it went in. Scott Beamer came out, great person that he was, bringing thousands of feet of electrical cord, and various kinds of fixtures, and set them up--which is the proper way to plan garden lighting but very few people will do it, entirely on spec. By trying it out we decided we could do without all that he proposed. The essential lighting on the upper, formal garden, and spotlighting one or two oaks to the north was about all that we did install.

Riess: So the \$25,000 sounds like it was reduced greatly. Who came to see the light show?

Scott: Mai Arbegast and I scheduled a department party out there. So the whole department came. We had a party to see the lighting--as an educational project with Scott Beamer as the star performer and teacher.

Riess: Was the department beginning to realize that they had a good thing in hand, now that it was the president's residence.

Scott: [shakes head]

Riess: Still no particular interest?

Scott: I don't think the landscape architecture department took any particular interest in the project at all. It seemed to me, and I talked to Michael Laurie about this, that this would be an ideal time to educate the president of the University on the importance of landscape architecture, and to get more prestige for the department, which had been always on the low end of the scale in environmental design, and that politically this was a natural opportunity. But no one followed through. I was retired very soon after, so I didn't do anything about it either. Working through the planning and building educated Mr. Hitch somewhat, I think, but not to the point of enlisting his support. The department really could have used this opportunity in a great way. If Professor Vaughan had been the chairman, I think he would have. I don't know who was chairman at that particular point.

Riess: Well, the dean of the College of Environmental Design might well have used it.

Scott: He might have, but he didn't.

Riess: Was that Martin Meyerson?

Scott: No, that must have been William L. Wheaton. Wheaton was too busy working on bigger things between Washington and the state. He was working on national and state political issues in housing and planning.

Riess: But you did educate President Hitch about it. In what way, and what were the results of this education?

Scott: I don't think I did succeed very much in this. He liked what we had planned and built, but I don't think I was able to make him see the larger picture in any way.

Riess: According to Mr. Hitch, it was very hard for his wife to have the garden a public place.

Scott: I got almost nowhere with Mrs. Hitch. I think she was very confused about her own role as the president's wife. She was interested in art and ceramics; they built in a special studio for her, into the house, which she seldom used. She seemed to feel that she had to do so many presidential duties that she couldn't take time for herself. And yet she was not comfortable in that role as the president's wife either, and always very worried about her daughter Caroline, worried about kidnapping. She was a worrier. Her concerns were not, I think, the larger issues.

Riess: So she didn't embrace the garden as a project?

Scott: She embraced the garden as a place to provide her with cut flowers every day. The next job for Russ Beatty was to build a big cut flower garden, and for Walter to deliver cut flowers to the house every day. The Blake House was her residence, to be managed in a kind of grand manner. She was interested in the history of the house, and garden. Mai had made a fine album of early and late pictures of the garden, which she lent to Mrs. Hitch.

Riess: There is a nice picture album that is now on the table in the house.

Scott: Mai took the pictures and made the album. Mai is a recorder. Mai has always taken pictures at various times from the same spot. She really records plant growth, and how it looks at various periods. She has taken wonderful slides and pictures. All those plant and garden slides in the department are Mai Arbegast's work.

Riess: And she did have that intense relationship with the house and garden for a couple of years. But then she was no longer part of the program?

- Scott: Well, she wasn't teaching in the University anymore, she didn't get tenure, so she couldn't afford to just be giving more time to it, although she often goes to visit. Mai keeps up her interest in everyplace and everybody. She's an amazing person.
- Riess: But there wasn't a way that you could hire someone like Mai? You didn't have positions at the beginning other than just your gardeners?
- Scott: I got two gardeners to assist Walter, and some student help, part time, and that's as much help as we ever got out there. Tree cutting and heavy pruning was done by outside contractors.
- Riess: Just a little detail: in memos where you refer to "filling and developing bowl to west of house," is that the swimming pool area that became the putting green? Is that what you mean by that?
- Scott: Yes. That was a very difficult problem because that whole area is a sink formed after an earthquake. There are two sloping ridges with two sinks between the ridges. Water collects in those sinks naturally, and to get water out of there we had to dig through a ridge and put in a very special kind of drainage in order to grow a lawn. Otherwise it would have become a marsh. It was a really very complex problem, and I'm sure in wet years it's still a problem. That sort of drainage is very imperfect and often requires pumping. A swimming pool in that area presented the same kind of problem. The soil becomes puddled. Only marsh plants and grasses grow well in such a hollow.
- Riess: That's interesting. Such a big project, it makes me think again of what a good experience it would have been for students to have worked there.
- Scott: Well, those students who were there during the time that this was going on all learned, through me, quite a good deal. But the department never set up projects in which various professors took part. They each taught their own separate course, they did not collaborate on problems--as they did at Cornell, which I think was a very much better system. But at the time I was in the department, either as a student or as a lecturer later, they never did that. So that whereas a person teaching construction might set up a construction problem using Blake Garden, it would be a little minor kind of thing. A professor teaching detailed design might make his students design a pergola for a particular place or something like that, but never utilizing the site as an overall problem, which it could have been--a very good problem.
- Riess: And a little satisfaction if it's a real problem, too.

Scott: Professors were beginning to get more interested in public work, park systems, and housing developments, at the time. They could have used it, but they didn't.

Now, I think I ought to mention this, that when Robert Tetlow became chairman, some years after I had retired, he got a notion that he could get a little money to do something about the Blake Estate. (Although he had ignored it totally before that and always voted against doing anything about the Blake Estate.) He got the notion that there ought to be a Friends of the Blake Estate. So he appealed to me to head such an organization and he would support it.

I said, "Thanks, but no thanks." I'm not about to take on that problem at this stage in my life. I'd had no support before and I was not about to try again. Even though the times had changed and it might have worked. It didn't work; he didn't find anybody, and nothing happened. You might talk to Tetlow, because he's still there, about how much of an effort he made--I have no idea.

Riess: If you retired, then you can't tell me, for instance, how the Saxons interacted with the gardeners.

Scott: No. I stopped going out there because I felt Walter was not a good enough maintenance person. I'd done a great deal to get his status raised to a higher and higher level, and he, I feel, didn't set a high enough standard for his own workmen. He never got ahead of just common things like the weeds each year. It was so frustrating. This place should have been a model of maintenance and I never was able to raise it to that degree.

Riess: Even though you were his boss in this case.

Scott: [laughs] Walter's words are telling: I'd say, "I'd like to see you do this, get this done by such and such a date." "No problem." But he seldom accomplished what I had asked for.

Riess: He called you "ruthless, and wonderful."

Scott: [laughs]

Riess: So there.

Scott: Ruthless because I cut trees that he didn't think should be cut because they were healthy trees. I've been called ruthless by many people, as are most artists and designers. [laughs]

Riess: But "wonderful." He obviously knew that you must love the place as much as he did.



Scott: Well, I gave it more attention than anybody else had and he got some satisfaction out of that. Most gardeners feel very lonesome. Not many people went out there; the garden wasn't used; they didn't get praise. A head gardener's job in a place like this is difficult. Mrs. Hitch was demanding in a way. Apparently the Saxons really liked the gardening and took a considerable interest, and both, I think, enjoyed the time that they were there very much because they really were interested in the garden, Mrs. Saxon particularly, according to Linda Haymaker.

Talking About the Garden

## The Paths, Labelling the Plants

Scott: The stone on the Blake Estate, the walls, the grotto, and all that, came from the estate. The Blakes were interested in that property because stone was part of his business. Other people might have been daunted by that rock--there's rocky subsoil and rock outcrop--but it interested the Blakes. When they came to build the paths, for instance, having a rock quarry, crusher in Richmond they prepared paths with bases sometimes eighteen inches thick. Moving a path was an enormous job. Where the lawn area is now, that lawn to the south of the driveway was criss-crossed with paths around a little old greenhouse, and service area. To remove those paths and get that area into a uniform planting area of soil was a major job. Nobody could understand why it took so long or cost so much in labor time.

Riess: Eighteen inches! The bases were really--

Scott: --crushed rock. You know, built up properly with coarse stone, and finer and finer; built up better than the bases of our streets.

Riess: You couldn't have turned them into drainage systems?

Scott: They didn't go in the right direction; they were paths. [laughs]

Riess: That's a wonderful bit of archaeology.

Did you find signs of the Blakes' idiosyncracies? [pause]  
We talked about the cats--.

Scott: They loved cats, and species roses. [laughs] With having so many pine needles available, we used them to surface paths, producing a marvelous springy walking surface.

Many of the areas that seem poorly planted are impossible because of the rocky subsoil, and/or poor drainage; drainage channels through all that area are curious because of earthquake

Scott: faulting action. Natural drainage has been changed by earthquake action, resulting in something like a moraine, mixtures of different kinds of soils deposited and drainage blocking, interesting geologically. I had a geologist come out and talk to me about it. There is a section about the geology in the long-range plan.

Riess: Was it under you tenure that plants were labelled there, to the extent that they are?

Scott: Mai had made the plant inventory, and labelling was one of the things that Bob Raabe and I did, and I'm sure that this continued with Russ Beatty. Walter tried to encourage people like horticultural society people and garden club people to come there, and he knew that labelling was needed. I remember we studied various kinds of labels, but the best waterproof kind are quite expensive. We had to settle for something less than good. How many got labelled I don't know. I think Linda Haymaker probably would have added a good many. She's been there ten, eleven years. She should have been made the director, after Walter.

Riess: You think it's another case of a woman being passed over?

Scott: Definitely.

Riess: Garrett Eckbo almost lived in the house? Do you remember anything about that? I think Walter told me that when the house was empty, I guess after Prytanean, Garrett Eckbo and his wife came up here and more or less said that they wouldn't mind living in the house.

Scott: I never heard that, but I know he had a hard time finding a place to live. When the landscape architecture department brought Garrett up to be chairman, he left a very nice home in southern California, and in Berkeley finding a house was difficult. So it's perfectly possible.

#### The Brochure, and Articles about the Gardens

Riess: I have a couple of final questions: the files are thick on getting that Blake Estate brochure together. It was just an impossible task to even write it? Everyone was in on it.

Scott: Except me, which is the curious part, because Mrs. Hitch asked me for quantities of material, which I gave her, and the next thing I knew there was the brochure--I'd been by-passed again.\*

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\*Letter from Scott to Appleyard. See Appendices, OO, PP.

- Scott: The article that Linda Haymaker wrote in Pacific Horticulture is the best thing that has come out in print.\* Infinitely better than the one that Garden Magazine did [1986].
- Riess: The Garden Magazine one was full of inaccuracies?
- Scott: Oh, yes, it's very poor.
- Riess: Wonderfully photographed. It is by Lawrence Lee. Who is Lawrence Lee?
- Scott: Lawrence Lee is now the director of horticulture at Staten Island Botanical Gardens [looking at magazine].
- Riess: He was a graduate of U.C. Berkeley?
- Scott: Yes, I guess that's why he came out here. He's a nice young man and knowledgeable about horticulture. Linda's article is very good, and well written.

#### The Garden, Twenty Years Ago

- Riess: How different is the garden now from 1964, would you say? It was a fully-grown garden then.
- Scott: Oh, yes, much of it was overgrown already, because there were plants from many lands, and many had been planted from seed, with no knowledge of how fast they would grow in this climate. They'd been planted too close together, which forces upright growth. Also the Blakes liked vines, had planted quantities of vines climbing on many trees--species roses, particularly, which have wild thorns. All species roses are very thorny, really wicked kinds of thorns. Many of those trees in what is now the lawn area and the entrance area had climbing roses clear to the top, festooning over them. It was handsome in a way, but truly a jungle.

I had made a study of species roses for Dr. Emmet Rixford, a great rosarian, who had asked me to make the study. I found many of them at the Blake Estate later. That study was published in California Horticulture. I knew about these roses. They were wonderful in a way, but you can't just cut them back, you have to take them out, because if you cut them back they grow even more vigorously, having such tremendous root systems. We had to actually

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\*"Blake Garden," Pacific Horticulture, Spring 1987, No. 1, pp. 8-13. See Appendices.

Scott: do away with what had been a good collection of species roses. But what was the place for? It wasn't a real botanical garden; it didn't have any great collections. It did have plants from many lands, adapting to this climate, and we tried to keep all of those that were really significant, or to keep one specimen of each in a place that didn't need to be cleared in order to make some space for people. To enjoy plants you have to have some kind of viewing space.

Many trees, for instance the magnolias planted around this main pool, were already too large. They were a poor selection. But at the time there were probably no horticultural varieties. They didn't grow those from seed; they bought those from the nursery as little magnolia trees. (Since then cultivars that are dwarfed, better proportioned, better shaped, have been developed.) Those magnolias had just been allowed to grow naturally, and when trees aren't pruned regularly, and later you start pruning them, you deform them.

Riess: So these were replanted?

Scott: No, they're still the original trees, but they're very deformed, and one or two have died, and their roots are cracking the pool. It's one of the major things that must be tended to, by next summer I understand. A lawn can't grow in that much shade. It's a design decision: either the trees should be taken out completely, and new ones planted, or given over to the lawn, letting the trees from the side do the enclosing. These are all design decisions which Walter was not capable of making, or wouldn't make, and even pruning heavily hurt him.

Riess: But you were there to make that decision.

Scott: I made the design decisions all the time I was in charge, but in order to control those trees then, they had to be thinned at least every other year.

Riess: And since you've left there hasn't been a design person there?

Scott: Russ Beatty has been in charge.

Russ Beatty, who is a landscape architect and a designer, but without the kind of experience that I have in back of me, simply couldn't get the money and didn't force the pruning. He doesn't have as strong a conviction about design as I have, let's say, so that less pruning got done. Now, the new man John Norcross is trained as an architect, not as a landscape architect. He worked up at the Botanical Garden and learned his plants by working there.

Riess: But that doesn't give you garden design.

Scott: No, it doesn't.

And Twenty Years Later

Scott: Linda Haymaker has much more of a design sense. She came out of the landscape architecture department, and has since gone back to the University and gotten herself a master's degree. She loves the place, and would have been an ideal person, but she's not exceedingly forceful. She couldn't be forceful under Walter Vodden; she's never been given the opportunity to make major decisions. I think she would have been the ideal person. However, she was not advanced to that position. Russ Beatty insists that Norcross has a strong design sense and will keep the hedges properly pruned and all that. I don't know.

Riess: What do you think the future is up there? You've hinted before at another big change.

Scott: Well, it's still an appropriate place that the University could use for some kind of a "think tank." There's plenty of space, both above and below the house, with easy access from the roads below and above to add extra housing, if needed, or extra laboratory space.

Riess: So you think it's not adequately used by having it the president's official residence/office.

Scott: Well, it's an expensive thing to maintain for that purpose, but it has been on the University's budget all this time. Only about four acres of the ten-acre site are developed and maintained.

Riess: Do you see a new push for the garden?

Scott: I don't see it; however, they have a new chairman of the department who's an entirely different kind of person. His name is Randy Hester, and Randy believes in what he calls "responsible design." He's done a lot of public work in which he involves all the people concerned in the decision-making process. This the department also believes in. I'm sure that he will concern himself with the Blake Estate because he's that kind of person.

I've put ten years of my life into working on the Blake Estate, and I'm still very hopeful that some good use will be made of that property.

## GERRIE SCOTT REMEMBERS



By John Parman

*The oldest living graduate of Landscape Architecture, Geraldine Knight Scott, FASLA shares her memories of being student—and teaching—in the Department, and of practicing in California over five decades.*

**CED News:** What was it like being a student here in the '20s?

**Scott:** I was in the Class of '26, when the Department was only 13 years old, with three faculty members. My class had eight students in it, of which two were female. I was dismayed to find that it was in Agriculture—I had come here expecting to go into a design profession, and I was amazed when I found I had to register in Agriculture. Art had been my strong field in high school, and I quite resented having to take all the agricultural science requirements, which left very little time for anything that could be called design. When I look back, however, it's all good, because as landscape architecture became a much broader subject, and really embraced ecology, which I'd had all the components of long before the word was coined. So it turned out to have been a good sequence, because I got all the science requirements over, and then went to Cornell for graduate work in design and made up for the deficiency.

I always knew that I would practice in the west. When I came back here from New York, I worked for Gregg and Shepherd, who were both Professors in the Department, as a kind of freelancer—there was no office big enough to employ a person full-time in those years. I got my first real job in Southern California, doing design-build work, which at that time was frowned upon totally by the profession. Those were the boom years, the twenties, and I worked there until the bust.

During the Depression, we all did whatever we could just to exist. I had made a lot of money in the twenties, so I went to Europe and stayed there almost two years, making it my business to see every great garden, urban square, and museum in Europe.

**CED News:** Were gardens the main work in the twenties?

**Geraldine Scott:** Yes, it was all estates—there was nothing else going on at that time. Southern California was where the money was—the movies were booming, attracting all kinds of talent, and that's

where the big estates were being developed. The firm I worked for did the biggest of them—the Harold Lloyd estate was the most famous. And there were others in Santa Barbara and Montecito, Pasadena, and other places.

*CED News:* When did you start teaching?

*Geraldine Scott:* After the war, my husband Mel Scott was hired to do a study of San Jose, and I found there was nothing for me to do. Slowly but surely, I got into teaching. I began to give some adult education courses in community planning, and to do drafting in an architect's office. Pretty soon, I was doing all the site planning, so I thought it was time to open my own office. I had been in practice with Helen Van Pelt in Marin County before the war. This time, my office was in Palo Alto. I had lots of clients because I'd become very well known through giving lectures all over the Bay Area, and I had more work than I could handle. A great backlog of demand for schools had developed during the war, because of the influx of new people in the Bay Area, so I got into school plant planning. I did a lot of site and landscape plans for high schools, mostly in Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties.

During this period, my husband was writing a book on the Bay Area. When L. Deming Tilton, who was teaching history of planning at Berkeley, dropped dead in the middle of the semester, Mel was invited to fill the void. The Chairman of the Landscape Department, H.L. Vaughan, whom I'd known forever, said that as long as Mel was commuting, I might as well commute, too. That's how I got invited to teach—around 1948. At first, I just assisted Vaughan in a site planning course. Then Mai Arbagast took time off to have a baby, and I took over her class. Finally they asked me to come on the faculty part-time. But I didn't enjoy assisting other people that much, so I declined. In 1958, when Burton Litton was Chairman, Mel and I were traveling in Europe when we got a letter inviting me to teach a class on my own terms, so I said okay. I taught until 1969 on a half-time or three-quarter time basis, while continuing to run my office.

I taught planting design. The Department had courses on plant identification, that sort of thing, but not on the actual designing with plants, so I originated that course. I had very thorough knowledge and experience in planting design, a subject neglected in practice and the curriculum.

*CED News:* How has the profession changed over your lifetime, from your standpoint?

*Scott:* It's changed enormously, of course. The political and economic conditions of this country have naturally had a great effect on what was almost entirely a luxury profession. That wasn't true when it was started by Frederick Law Olmsted, who had a very broad concept of what the profession was, but in practice it soon focused on designing estates for the wealthy. During the Depression, landscape graduates found employment in public works, the National Park Service, the Forest Service, the State Park Department, and so on. Nobody was specifically trained for that work—landscape architecture, which was only being taught in maybe five or six universities by that time, produced the people who came closest to what was needed. As more graduates found their way into public work, the curriculum in universities began to change to meet the need. There was a broadening of the curriculum—most of the planning up to then was city planning; now it became regional planning in some instances, and landscape architecture grew from estates to include campuses, parks, subdivisions, regional parks, watersheds, and finally to really encompass the broadest aspects of land planning, always in Olmsted's mind, and among the founders of the profession, but the opportunities weren't there.

*CED News:* Have the underlying skills that a landscape architect needs to have changed since you were a student?

*Scott:* A person coming out of landscape architecture today has much more technical knowledge than I ever had, that was re-

quired in my whole experience. And of course what I was taught in science has become almost totally obsolete. Design, on the other hand, doesn't become obsolete. You don't really teach people to become great designers—you teach art, you teach them how to see and how to make connections between the things that they see. This is the best thing, to really teach people to understand what they're looking at.

*CED News:* Did you enjoy teaching?

*Scott:* Although I'd taught adults, I never thought of teaching at the University. I found that I liked it, though, particularly the contact with students. I'd had enough experience then to feel I had something to offer, and I really liked working with young, creative minds. I taught through the sixties, of course, when it was hard going. Students were waking up politically and they weren't paying too much attention, a lot of them, to landscape architecture. I'd gone through something of the same process in the Depression, and I was sympathetic to the fact that they were becoming politically conscious citizens. I was the only woman teaching in the Department, and I wasn't on the academic ladder, so perhaps I had the confidence of students that others didn't have. I found it all fascinating, although very exhausting. The Department has recently surveyed its graduates, as part of its 75th anniversary, and a lot of them from this period tell us that they didn't really learn much landscape architecture at Berkeley. They grew up. I saw them do it. They don't feel they wasted their time, however—those were the times, and they were there to learn what there was to be learned. □



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